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888 young. Once she, too, had liked to have her calf look round and full.

[437] [476] "Will you exchange this bottle of palm oil for tobacco?" she asked, showing her empty clay pipe.

She came in, saying she would like to rest, and began unfastening her top tunic so that she might make a pad of it on which to sit down on the ground, for the earth spirits [784] forbid women who had reached puberty to sit upon the bare earth. In her second tunic, somewhat fresher than the top one, she stood hesitating, looking about her for a place to sit down, until we brought her a carved stool we had bought the day before. Instead of putting on the top pangi again, she used it to cover her knees.

[576] "*Bak'a muye*," she said, "white woman, you ought to cover your knees, too, when you sit."

And sitting there, examining us and our belongings, she muttered her comments about our appearance and dress as she smoked, and muttering she swayed slightly, until the swaying rhythm seemed to bring a melody into her head, and she began to sing.

[533] "*The American Bak'a*
Have come from far,
American koni
Has brought them
To the Saramacca River,
To the Saramacca people;
They must not sicken
They must not die."

While the men on the shore talked and called upon their gods to keep them free, the woman rocked and sang this invocation for our safety, forgetting for the moment that we were whites, whom the ancestors hated.

"You have so much wealth," she said to the white man, looking about her at our provision boxes, "you must have many wives."

And back again she went to her song, repeating the words over and over, until seeing people approach she rose slowly and went back to the river where her rice was drying.

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said, "It is not a woman and a snake, as you might imagine from this," and she indicated one or two lines of the design. "We do not carve the snake in my family. We have a *tchina*—a taboo—against carving snakes, for snakes are our kunu. . . . Years ago my brother went to the French shore and worked for a white man. The white man asked him to kill a snake, and he was afraid, but the white man laughed at him, and because he had a weak ak'a, because his soul was not strong, he killed the snake. If he had told us about it and had sent a piece of the snake, we would have held a burial, as would have been right. But he did not do as he should have done, and so now the snake is not a good spirit for us. We must give it offerings, and dance kunu. It is bad to have a weak soul. My brother did a bad thing, and now I and all my children, and my daughters' children, and their daughters' children on and on will have this kunu."

Farther up the river, in the deep interior, we stopped at the village of Opoku. As we walked to the house of the village head to give him our greetings, we noticed an unusually large house. It was a *liba-wosu*, a house with an upper story, more substantially built than any we passed, and ornamented with elaborate carvings, as were all personal houses of the men. The owner of it, we heard, had been dead eight months. Four more would need to go by before it could be entered. It had been owned by a powerful man, and his belongings were many. We could see some of them through the openings between the slats which formed its walls—an apinti drum, magnificently carved, tall earthen demijohns of rum, boxes, the edge of a metal canister and a lamp. Inside there were guns, and machetes, and native carved paddles, and implements.

Our men joked about the contents of the demijohns as they passed, speculating on the strength of the rum when the containers were opened, and when we asked about the house later—whether, for instance, we could not buy the drum, we were told that the twelve-month interval between a man's dying and the dividing of his property was not yet passed. When the time came, his brothers and sisters

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783 here at the Mamadam, and later he would bathe with this
824 that he might be purified. Meanwhile Sedefo and Asikanu, each in his turn, addressed the Mother of the River, each speaking his errand and asking that his journey be prospered.

787 Bayo came up alone when the loading was quite finished. He sat down on a crosspiece of the shrine to one side of the flat rock, poured some of the contents of the bottle on the stone, and, taking up one of the egg-shaped pieces of pemba, he rubbed it between his fingers and touched the [302] moist stone with his whitened hands. Now with his fingers he streaked his upper arm, just below the shoulders and over the muscles which played to the swinging of the pole-stick, and then his chest and knees.

"Mother of the River, give us a safe journey. Carry the white man and his woman without sickness. I thank you."

Later, when we were about to make off, he turned to us with his ready laugh. "You will walk well, Ba'ka. I have a strong spirit. I said things to the Mother of the River under my breath which you did not hear. The Mother of the River will look after you."

"What is this log, Bayo, right here on top of the falls? Why has no one claimed it?" we asked, pointing to the log of purple-heart close by, which we had noticed lying across the Mamadam.

"When it was sent down, something happened to turn it sidewise, and it was caught so. No one will touch it. It must be that the gods wanted it for themselves."

4

798 There are many shrines on the river. At the G'an Creek a
784 man would speak his prayer from a distance, call the creek "ancestor," state his errand, and continue his journey. Far up the stream, where the juncture of the Pikien Rio and the Grand Rio forms the river which the Bush Negroes call the Saramacca, is the Tapa Wata shrine. There, our men said, we would do well to avoid looking, though our boat rested across the river more than a quarter of a mile

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away. It seemed dangerous even to notice the strip of white cotton which showed high above the falls, though the stick from which it hung we could not see.

"Human beings do not go there," Bayo had said warningly. "Human eyes must also not go there."

But the shrine at the Mamadam is a friendly place. There a man finds a moment's ease. For a brief interval, at least, the voyager upstream or down rests there to get his breath, as he makes ready for a new start. Directly below the falls is a stretch of still water, which follows upon the wearisome portage at the Musumba Prati and the struggle with the rapids just above it, while, when continuing up river, the boatmen face a succession of rapids before another stretch of quiet water is reached. It is not strange, therefore, that no man, whatever his need to make time, will fail to stop at the Mamadam long enough to make known to the Mother of the River his errand and to ask for the continuance of her protection.

This shrine is the home of the Great Mother of the inland waters, she who, above all else, had secured to the ancestors of these Bush Negroes their freedom from slavery. In the city and on the plantations of the coastal region the Negroes, under states of possession by the water gods, sing of their longing to join those at the Mamadam.

Let me die on the river, O!
Let me die on the water, O!
All the Ingi spirits
Are at the Mamadam,
Let me die on the river, O!

Deep in the interior, if one of the elders, let us say a man of the Dahomey clan, is alarmed at the prospect of the white man penetrating their bush, some man can be looked to, then, to say reassuringly, "Have no fear. They will not come beyond the Mamadam!"

For this river is their own. "Once, long, long ago," the legend was told us, "this river was but a creek. There were no great trees here, no rocks. There were no boats, no

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place was pointed out to us. The carved representation of the human face of the image was worked more carefully than is ordinarily done. Here the white clay was applied more thickly. The white cloth hanging from its stick was larger than we had ever seen before, the offerings of food and bottles and calabashes more numerous than at other ancestral shrines.

"This is where the yorka of the father of the Granman comes," we were told.

But why the father? What of the mother, the parent to whom the Granman was related? This village did not even belong to the Matchau clan to which he himself belonged. Yet with the pride that this was the shrine to the spirit of the Granman's father went a realization of its importance. Here was something outside the legal order, something which transcended the facts of descent and the theory of relationship. It was becoming ever more evident that in this "matriarchate" the father did count.

6

The inheritance of the father's kunu was one instance where the father needed to be taken very much into account. "If this man's children should take some of his goods," they had said, pointing at things we could see through the slats of the dead man's treasure house in the village of Opoku, "they will get his kunu, too. No man wants that."

Then there was the *trefu*, or *tchina*—taboo—as it was called in the bush, of which our cook had told us. Every individual in the bush had his tchina. Everyone knew the things he must not eat, or must not do. One man had to abstain from eating *anumara*, the great fish of the river. Another might never sleep in the open without a roof over his head. Should he find himself out in the bush with night coming, he must stop early enough to erect a small shelter and thatch it that his head might be covered when he slept. Bayo, we soon learned, might not eat food out of the cooking pot, and Sedefo could not bathe in a creek. Kasanya

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did not eat deer's meat, or his brother-in-law the meat of the bush-hog. 784 962

There are many kinds of tchina. There are the obia tchina. A man wearing or carrying with him a charm—an obia—will have several prohibitions imposed on him. If these are observed, the potency of the magic in the object given him will remain, but if they are violated, it will become a worthless ornament. When an obia is bought, its maker will take the hands of the man for whom he has made it in his, and pass his own lightly over them, blowing softly, so that the power of the spirit he had called upon when making it may enter into the man for whom the obia was made. Then the obia man will lean over and whisper, that no one might overhear, "When you wear this, do not get into a boat backwards," or, perhaps, "Never eat crab meat while you have this about your neck," or "Do not eat cassava and rice out of the same calabash." 789 784 [262]

But with the personal tchina it is otherwise. At birth each individual falls heir to a number of taboos. They come to him from his father. When a woman is with child she observes her husband's taboos as well as her own, for the child might otherwise be harmed in the womb by being nurtured on what is hateful to his father, and therefore to himself, since his father's taboos are his own. Male and female children take these tchina from the father. Their mother's tchina are no concern of theirs. Those which she observes had come to her from her own father. What makes the father ill will make the children ill, too. This holds for their entire lives, and the male children transmit their tchina from generation to generation. 784 424 [843]

A simple instance of this is the one which happened at our base camp when Bayo, who we knew could not eat out of a cooking pot, came one day to ask us for a dish. "My father forgot his eating dish. Will you let him use one of yours? He cannot eat out of a cooking pot."

When one man says of another, therefore, "He has the same tchina I have," he is saying that the two of them are related in the father's line. [602]

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602 784 But when one man shares a tchina with another it does not mean that they only share prohibitions. There are privileges as well. There is the right to lift a *kandu*, for example.

789 The outsider among the Bush Negro people cannot go long without learning of kandu. Many times we had noticed a small bundle of twigs hanging from a nail over a doorway of an uninhabited hut, or had remarked a small strip of colored cloth and a feather or two knotted together and swinging from an orange tree, or a calabash filled with hardened sacred clay, suspended from a limb where a creek entered the river. When we asked about them, we learned that each was a kandu, a spiritual lock, which by the potency of the magic put into it by the maker protected the house, or the tree, or the fishing creek—whatever we happened to be discussing at the moment—from thieves. It was a guard which no man dared violate.

Bayo had made one for us early in our visit to the Suriname bush.

"I will make you something to keep away thieves. I will make you a kandu."

He had asked us for a needle, and from wood of a special kind which is used only in kandu he fashioned the representation of a human head. Some native fiber and two kinds of sacred grass held the needle and the carved image together. This he covered with white clay, the sacred pemba, and the red coloring of the kuswe plant, which is also sacred. When he had spoken his invocations, and dipped the kandu in the river to purify it, he brought it to us.

"Put it where you keep your money. I have put strong magic into it. Your possessions will be safe. Anyone who opens the chest and sees this, will not touch what is inside. . . . But do not eat out of a cooking pot. It will lose its power. I have given it my own tchina."

But it seemed that a kandu did not always remain inviolate.

[593] "It would not be good," Bayo explained, "if a man went away and left a kandu over the house, and no one but he

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and how to cure fever, and fio-fio. He is shown how to make obia medicine for lesions of the skin, and for colds, and for diseases of children. He is taught the protective obias for the woman who conceives, and those which help conception, the obias which keep people safe on the river, and those which guard them in the bush against enemy spirits.

It may be, too, that during this first period of training, the initiate is shown how to trap and treat the snakes from which the snake "cuttee" is made. This cure for snake bite is famous in Suriname among Bush Negroes and whites alike, but the secret of preparing the cuttee is known to the Bush Negroes alone.

While the young man is in training, he may not go with a woman, and there are many more prohibitions which he must observe.

"Not all men can become obia men."

"Does a man need obia in order to have Kromanti?" we asked.

"To have Obia Kromanti, yes. . . . Now do not ask about Kromanti, white man," said Bayo's uncle with a smile. "Only a Kromanti man knows about Kromanti. Do not ask, because I cannot tell you."

5

Men and women constantly drifted to our base camp with carvings for our collection. Many brought us obias. Some of these obias they took from their persons and sold to us, but others were newly made for us, for some of those they themselves wore, they would not part with, whatever the inducement.

"Why do you want my obia, white man?" a Bush Negro asked one day. "Do you want an obia to carry you well to your country? I will make one for you, but do not ask for mine. Mine has kept me in good health. I cannot give away an obia which has served me well. The spirits would be angered."

He returned after a day with one which resembled his own, and as he gave it, he placed it on the upturned palms

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789 before the new moon comes, and when you do this, you
778 must say,
439

"Obia-o,
Your spirit must stay,
[539] *Your power must not leave this.*
Do not go elsewhere,
Do not become defiled."

789 There was the obia on which Bayo had lavished all the
778 magic he could command so that his friends might be safe in the bush. From the sacred grass known as *s'a*—the same grass from which the woven ceremonial dancing skirts are made here on the river—he made several long lengths of twine. These he wove into a square which later became the pendant of this neck obia. On this, as a base, he sewed two cowries facing each other, and in the middle of the fringed border of this pendant he fastened a bit of a macaw's feather, blue and orange in color.

The twisted cord about the neck had several knots in it where the cord met the pendant. Tying is the symbol of attaching, of binding, so that if an invocation was uttered in the making of these knots, and the twine was then drawn taut, the power was certain to be lodged inside the knots. Then, too, knots form links, and links, whether they be in a metal chain or in fiber or wood, symbolize union, and any object or ornament with links is, therefore, much
[775] valued in bush and in town. A linked chain is a favorite gift to please the akra, the soul, among the coastal Negroes.
[832] A woman who wishes to attach her man to her will rise at night noiselessly and will knot a hair from the man's head three times, speaking her invocation. In the bush few obias are found which do not have several knots in them.

In his exuberance Bayo placed so many prohibitions on this finely woven obia, that we asked him if he could not nullify some of them.

● 784 "For very strong obias, we have many tchina. It is best
789 so, because no one who wants to harm you will guess all of them and so succeed in robbing the obia of its power.

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But if the tchina are too difficult to observe, then the man who made the obia can take the tchina away."

Suiting his action to the word, Bayo took some water from the river into his mouth and, spraying it over the obia, said, "The tchina I gave you, I take away. The breaking of these tchina must no longer defile you or take away your power."

There was nothing more hateful to the gods and the spirit of obia than an unclean woman, yet if an obia man wished, he could instruct the power in the obia not to take offense at unintentional contacts with menstruating women, or at cloths belonging to such women, or at food prepared by such women. But to accomplish this, an obia man had to be very powerful and, even so, he could not feel sure that the obia spirit would countenance such violations indefinitely.

All of these personal obias had definite attributes. One was made to guard an individual on the water, another in the bush. There were obias for successful hunting and fishing, for being safe against the evil spirits at the crossroads, for slander, and for envy. One obia saw to it that the soul remained strong, another that no illness sent by an enemy might lodge itself in the body of the wearer; there were love obias, and fighting obias, and obias which kept ghosts away.

Yet whatever such obias were made of, the object in itself had no validity. A simple fiber with a jaguar's tooth attached to it might well have greater powers for safety in the bush than an elaborately wrought obia, whose maker had not a strong obia spirit to give it spiritual power. Without this supernatural potency, it would be like a village god that had been allowed to rot because of itself it was merely a block of wood, and the deity for whom it had been made had not come to animate it.

6

Long ago, the Anansi stories tell us, there was a bird that knew obia. The cries of this bird shook all the kingdoms

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
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832 Company, some ninety miles in the interior, we were informed by the physician in charge that it is not infrequent to have Bush Negro women report for internal disturbances, which upon examination prove to be irritation and small hæmorrhagic areas. The physician believed that this condition was due to the men's practice of using the mucca-mucca seed.

844 During childbirth the mother stays in her own hut. She is often attended by her mother, her female relatives, and friends. In every village there are one or more women who are skilled in the art of midwifery; these women are called *pekein mama*—either "little mother" or "mother of little children." At the time of childbirth, the pekein mama is assisted by four little girls from about ten to twelve years of age. The pekein mama uses a liberal quantity of hot water in the process of delivery. In the event of an abnormal condition, it is the duty of the pekein mama to deliver the child as skilfully as possible. The woman bears the ordeal of childbirth with the usual primitive fortitude, although the pains of labour seem to be as great among these people as among women of more civilized countries. The mother must drink only hot water for three months after the birth of the child.

846 847

853 Children are nursed at the breast for a period of three months. They are then fed a little mush made of cassava to which is gradually added rice, a small amount of meat, eggs, and plenty of fruit, but periodical nursing may sometimes continue for as long as two years. The mothers often chew the food before giving it to their babies.

2: Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
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were killed. When we told Abaisa about this, he nodded approvingly, not at all surprised that his obeiah charm had warned us of the impending danger. 778

Other bush beliefs come under the head of *trafers*, or taboos. Primitive behaviour is very largely governed by categorical rules; although the individual is unaware of the origin and purpose of these rules, violation of a taboo is unthinkable. It is trafer, for instance, to sit on the ground. This explains the many intricately carved stools in our collection of Djuka art objects. It is also trafer for a Bush Negro woman to have intercourse with anyone outside of her own tribe. This was not so in the old days, for Stedman mentions that the white commissioners parleying with the rebel blacks were liberally entertained and provided with women for the night. Such a thing would be trafer now. It is taboo to harm the alligator, and if you were, by some unspeakable chance, to kill one, its ghost would return and destroy all the children in your family. 784 [825]

Besides these general taboos, there are personal trafers and food taboos that differ for each individual. If one man shoots a sloth (*seloss*) it will spoil his gun, but his brother or his neighbour may kill one with impunity. It is that particular Djuka's trafer. Another man may have the turtle as his food taboo. The turtle is a well-known figure in Djuka folklore. The *sacri patu*, also called *logosu* and *kaw*, is spoken of as "walking like a sick man." The belief that when a turtle bites a man it will hold on until it thunders, a common belief in parts of rural America, is also found in Djuka land. 825 784

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
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784 These food trafers are sometimes chosen by the individual,
262 and are acquired also by inheritance. A certain Bush Negro
[424 got his trafer in this way: His grandmother had a vision,
787] called *papa winti,* and she informed her grandson that she had been possessed. This made him feel the spirit of Cromanti. In that bad state he got the *idée fixe* that shooting a turtle would be reprehensible and dangerous. This animal then became his tabooed food, and for the rest of his life it is trafer so far as he is concerned.

797 So far only a slight attempt has been made to Christianize the Djukas. The Catholics and Moravian Brothers have established mission stations at a few points along the rivers. Their efforts at conversion appear on the whole to be unsuccessful. The Bush Negroes are converted in small numbers and very superficially; in moments of stress they will revert back to their jungle deities. The whole spirit of Christian customs is foreign to their mode of life. They have the Gran
776 Gadu, an adequate enough image of divine power. Their
782 prayers are sometimes said directly to him, or they pray to their ancestors to intercede with the Gran Gadu for aid. Sometimes the prayer is said by being beaten out on the tom-
[778] tom, for the tomtom is sacred, and the throbs of the great

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
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412 [501] hung up on a peg. The canoe paddles are actually employed every day on the river, and the flails beat the day's wash of soiled togas and coyos.

352 [784] [414] Since it is taboo to sit on the ground, a large number of stools are made, pierced and decorated, with now and then a tiny cabinet inside them. Wooden locks that actually work are seen on the doors, especially in Aucaner villages, guarding the treasures inside. These are West African survivals; the same type of device can be found in several parts of the Old Continent. They are huge affairs often two feet in length. Door sills and door posts, bows and sterns of canoes, 532 canoe seats and calabash gourds (occasionally decorated by a woman) are all embellished with ornamentation of great intricacy. It is amazing that these designs could be wrought without preliminary designing, which would seem to be necessary, but so far as we were able to observe there is no conscious planning before the carving begins.

The symbolism employed in these pieces of sanni is limited to a few conventionalized motifs. Moreover, there is a variation in the symbolism peculiar to the individual artist, which is not comprehensible solely from an examination of the piece itself. Unless one can locate the original carver, it is impossible, for the most part, to be certain what the symbols mean. The same motif will be differently interpreted by different natives, and often has no objective meaning. It is therefore impossible to undertake an elaborate interpretation of Djuka symbolism.

There are a few outstanding designs found on a large

/20/

765 Thereupon follows a second, who just like the first has a calabash in hand, but this time filled with spirituous liquor, and from time to time sprinkles a few drops of it on the ground, in token of the fact that on this occasion, too, by means of drink, they think of the deceased with joy.

Then they again return to the dwelling, where all are gathered, and celebrate an enjoyable night with song and dancing until daybreak.

Chapter XII

Character, Virtues and Vices

157
[577] The Bush Negro, as I have already said above, has a great deal of respect for old age and for distinguished persons; with respect to their closest relations they are honest, which they can-
[461] not pride themselves on otherwise. In their ordinary affairs they
[609] are not lazy, but work tirelessly whenever it is necessary. With
[152] respect to strangers they are generous and obliging, all the more when they can assume that they may claim reward. Jealousy,
[784] envy, and malice are their greatest vices. Concerning many matters they have an antipathy that they call trefoe (treef). Thus,
[781] for instance, one will eat something, the other not. Also they are very superstitious in small matters, to which they cling all the way down to distant generations; they call that obia (literally translated, bewitchment, magic).

252
[123] An Auca girl who through attachment to my wife and me has already lived with us in the town for fully five years, because
[589] since the death of her husband, who was one of my most trusted workers, she did not want to attach herself to another, and who performed all kinds of housework for us, carries her trefoe of not eating any unscaled fish so far that she will not even cook her food on a fire where there is a pot in which an unscaled fish was previously prepared. I know another one who uses no milk and also does not eat meat of any kind (with the exception of bacon), unless it be game, and then it must be prepared by her, on the grounds that everything is prepared with butter and that butter comes from

/36 cont./

577 all, toward one another as fellow tribesmen they are very honest and trust one another's word. Frequently it happens that among them one family leaves the camp to go on a journey or else is absent for some other reason, and that it must leave behind unfenced the cultivated land planted with rice, tubers, bananas, bakoven, and sugar cane. But never will another of them steal any of that. And similarly their dwellings are open, since the entrance is not closed off by any door; upon their departure they leave one thing and another in it, but they will never miss anything upon their return. Certainly contributing to this is the circumstance that in the vicinity of everybody's property there is a sign or idolatrous image, which they call obia, to which great power is ascribed, and for those who might want to commit dishonest acts, the legend can be observed, as for the European: "Beware of mantraps." The fear that they have of these obias is not unjustified, for if it should happen at any time that misuse of trust took place, then the culprit, however long it takes, upon discovery will not escape the revenge of the deceived, revenge which frequently consists in the administering of secret remedies whereby terrible diseases and sufferings, if not death, come about.

626

734

152 They are very concerned about the faithfulness of their
837 wife or wives, /35/ for the Bush Negro is very jealous, whereas the wives cannot be exonerated of being susceptible to seduction. Accordingly it happens among them more than once that marital fidelity is violated.

184 Of the various tribes, the Aucaners are the most
[177] civilized, but over against that also the craftiest, which can be
[157] attributed to their more frequent intercourse with Europeans.
[161] Among their tribes they are the most powerful, and their numerical strength is estimated at 4,000 to 5,000 souls.

123 According to the declaration of the Bush Negroes, no White has previously enjoyed the trust and attachment that I experienced from them. However, secretively they always conduct themselves toward the Whites, with respect to me they make an exception. If there is something secret among them that I should like to know, they will, upon my request, immediately and without any diffidence communicate it to me.

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613 571 Thus the lo appears to us above all as a social and political unit, based in principle on matrilineal relationship but easily able to welcome heterogeneous elements. It is the framework by means of which the individual is integrated into the collectivity.

614 Functions of the lineage (bee).

—Members of the same bee form a joint group from the legal point of view, even if they do not live in the same village and are under different authorities. They recognize a common legal responsibility; for example, they are obliged, at least in principle, to pay the debts contracted by one of them. Reciprocally, the inheritance of one of them is shared among them all.

614 784 —They have the same religious responsibility, that is, they are subject to the same kunu. The kunu is a curse called down upon a group by a divinity since an ancient era. It is transmitted exclusively by the mother. We shall show in the remainder of this work the considerable importance of this notion in the social life of the Refugee Blacks.

614 —They cannot (at least in principle) contract a union with one another. The bee thus constitutes in principle the unit subject to the law of exogamy.

935 An offense against exogamy, pikadu, incest in the wide sense, is regarded as very grave.

613 Functions of the lo: The lo transposes onto the material plane the legal principles resulting from the conception of the lineage: joint rights over land, common legal responsibility. Each of them forms a social unit in principle sufficient unto itself, possessing an ancestor worship peculiar to it, a head acting the role of ancestor priest and judge, materially grouped in one village, enjoying exclusive rights over a well-defined soil.

/21 cont./

602 613 614 191

1. This conception of kinship is also found among the Agni of the Ivory Coast and the Fon of Dahomey; it may be widespread in Black Africa, especially in populations with matrilineal filiation.

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/22/ This conception, associated with that of the kunu, conflicts with the fractioning of lineages on the religious plane, even when a scission has taken place on the plane of residence. The rigor of the principle laid down, the quasi-mathematical transmission from one generation to the next of appellations based on rank relative to the foundress, prohibits the thought that elements foreign to the lineage can be integrated into this system by any process whatever. Nevertheless, a doubt remains as to the possibility of assimilating fragments with paternal kinship, for in paternal kinship the same principle of classificatory kinship rules, and the same appellations are used. We shall show that such a process of assimilation actually exists on the social plane, but that it is inconceivable on the religious plane, the kunu always being transmitted by the mother. /Fig. 3 appears here./

602 613 614

Knowledge of genealogical ties is very variable from one lineage to another. Outside of the great splits like Dipélu I-Dipélu II, we have demonstrated that small fractions of several lineages could no longer be attached to the main trunk, the genealogical ties being irremediably lost. The people concerned had never realized this; they had never wondered about it. This was the case particularly:

—With Samma's descendants (Dipélu II, Asisi);

—With the group of Atili's descendants (Lapé, Boniville).

[1078]

In both cases the split was very recent; old men dead for only a few years knew the genealogical ties now lost.

/23 cont./
613 614 Not one of the members of the group could trace back to the common ancestress; yet these three fractions together behave as
[601] [784] a single lineage. All its members know their mutual appellations "brother," "uncle," etc. All are subject to the same kunu.

The law of exogamy is respected within each fraction, but
613 614 582 123 there are seven cases of unions between members of different fractions; these unions are disapproved of in principle, but they are tolerated.

Thus, on the subject of exogamy, we see the thought of the Refugee Blacks breaks away from the rigorous principle on which their social order is based. It is the actually known genealogy which counts in their eyes on this point.

613 614 128 [115] [601] In December, 1958 we were able to reconstitute the complete genealogy of the group (Fig. 4, thanks to the memories of the doyenne of the group, Ma Imma, who had lived for a very long time isolated in a village of the Maroni estuary. The data thus reconstituted are in complete agreement with the kinship appellations among members of the various fractions. /24/
/Fig. 4 appears here./

The case of the Kotika lineage is thus particularly interesting, for we find ourselves knowing its genealogy completely when its members know it no more than partially.

613 614 [602] Study of this group shows that the forgetting of kinship ties has no effect on the physical grouping of the lineage and its functioning as a social unit.

It has direct repercussions only on the observation of the principle of exogamy. Thus the way in which exogamy is understood and observed appears to us from now on as a secondary criterion having no certain value for the recognition of a common origin.

[621] Some Djuka and Saramaka have settled among the members of the Kotika lineage, but as individuals.

[621] The Lapé (La Paix) lineage, whose name alludes to one of the great plantations of the Cottica River in the 18th century, is
24 [See p. 34, Category 116 -- Analyst]

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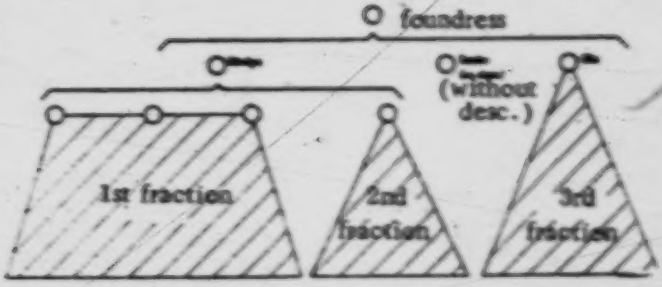

Fig. 4. Common genealogy of the three fractions of the Kotika lineage.

[62] divided between the small villages of Lapé Tabiki and Loka. It is a well-grouped lineage whose members know their genealogy perfectly as far as a common ancestress named Mata, who must have lived at the end of the 18th century; only one small group which we shall call Lapé 2 (descendants of Atili) does not know exactly the ties attaching them to the principal group. The law of exogamy is respected rigorously within this group; there is not a single case of marriage between the two fractions. The members of the two fractions consider themselves a single lineage. They have the same kunu.

[78]

[184] Note that there is a Lapé Io among the Djuka, regarded as of the same origin.

[621] No element of heterogeneous origin has settled in the villages of the Lapé Io.

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[361] The Dju lineage, which occupies the central part of the Asisi Island, also fits the definition of kin groups among the Refugee Blacks. Its members know /25/ their entire genealogy as far back as a common ancestress named Aluku, doubtless, tracing to the middle of the 18th century.

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[591]
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/26 cont./

This village had no future. Its complement did nothing but melt away for half a century, especially under the influence of venereal diseases.

Neither time nor geographical separation have brought on scission on the religious or legal planes. In this respect the members of Dipélu I and Dipélu II continue to think of one another as [784] the same lineage. They remain subject to the same kunu.

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The law of exogamy continues to be applied rigorously within Dipélu I and within Dipélu II, but marriages are permitted between Dipélu I and II. There are no longer any social sanctions about this, and the common origin of the two groups is so remote that they scarcely think any more of applying to them the term [784] pikadu. But such unions remain exceptional, the people concerned continuing to fear a superhuman sanction.

[621] No element of heterogeneous origin, fragment paternally related or refugee outsiders, has settled among the Dipélu.

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[621]

The Papalston or Kawina lineage (Papalston village) has remained perfectly coherent and well grouped. Its members know their genealogy as far back as an ancestress named Téréza, who must have lived at the beginning of the 18th century. But there exists a small fraction, nearly extinct, which we shall designate as Papalston 2, which presents a separate genealogy going almost [614] as far back in time. Nobody knows the origin of this group exactly; it is regarded as connected by kinship ties to the main group, but the members of the two groups consider that they form two distinct [784] lineages. They do not have the same kunu.

[582] Marriage is not tolerated within the principal group, but it is allowed between members of the two groups.

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Moreover, with the Papalston lives a small group which fled from Surinam about the end of the 19th century, originally of the Bakabuchi tribe. This group has no kinship tie at all with the Papalston but has placed itself under the authority of the head

/26 cont./

613 621 of the Papaïston lo. It is generally designated by "Toïna's family." Toïna being the doyenne of the group.

613 614 [621] The Awara Bakka lineage (Asisi village) has a more complex and particularly interesting structure. Study of its genealogy shows that it is in fact divided into three fractions which we shall call Aw.B.1, Aw.B.2, Aw.B.1 /misprint for Aw.B.3 -- Tr./. The Aw.B.1 know /27/ their genealogy perfectly back to an ancestress named Akyé, great-great-grandmother of the centenarian Kuluba († 1957). Akyé must have lived toward the end of the 18th century.

613 614 571 [621] Awara Bakka 3 is a paternally related fragment which was "assimilated" to the principal group by a process of which several other examples exist among the Boni. It was founded by Anéta, a Djuka woman originally from the village of Tabiki on the Tapanaoni, wife of Pèèyon (Aw.B.1), who remained there with her numerous descendants after the death of her husband.

The members of this group, who should normally be regarded as Djuka and outsiders to the lo, end up by being engulfed in the social organization and ancestor worship of the Awara Bakka. The [601] daughters of Anéta and Pèèyon were called "sisters" by the Aw.B.1 by reason of patrilineal relationship. These appellations were [784] transposed for their descendants to the point where many ended by losing their true origin from sight, but the Aw.B.3 keep a separate religious and legal responsibility and are subject to their own kunu, that of the Djuka village of Tabiki from which came their ancestress.

613 614 As a matter of fact, as we shall show by studying the beliefs of the Boni, the kunu is irremediably transmitted by the mother and no process of assimilation has any effect on this. Thus the Aw.B.3 are not really part of the lineage, they are separated from it by a clear criterion, obvious in the eyes of all, impossible to disregard or forget.

/27 cont./

614 The Aw.B.2, on whom we could not get sure information
[123] because this very closed group did not cooperate willingly with the inquiry, appear to be in a very similar situation, with the difference that their genealogy goes back much farther in time and they no longer remember the origin of this fraction nor the
[184] circumstances which tied its fate to that of the Aw.B.1. This group apparently has a separate kunu.

613 614 582 [183] The Awara Bakka lineage is in a special situation from the point of view of exogamy, for not only are there marriages between one fraction and another, but there are two within the same fraction and between relatively near relatives. Thus this group, without openly rejecting the law of exogamy, does not attach the same importance to it as do the others.

613 [101] The Afi lineage. This lineage was founded by Afi, wife of a man from Papaïston, who came to live with him. Like the Toïna lineage, she had come from the small tribe called Bakabuchi which lived in Surinam. However, the Afi and Toïna lineages are not of the same matrilineal origin and the present members of each of the two small groups have no common worship. All of
[571] them have lost every tie with their original tribe, and their social life is entirely dependent on that of the Boni group which has taken them in.

[621] Afi settled near Kormotibo. This site is abandoned by her descendants who live, most of them, in Asisi, the rest in Kormotibo.

[619] The lineage has lost every tie with its group of origin. Nevertheless, it is assumed that if one of them wanted to go back there, on proving his relationship, he would take up all his rights again and could demand a site for making his clearings.

613 621 571 /28/ The process of assimilation which took place for the AW.B.3 did not come into play for Afi's descendants with respect to the Papaïston lineage. They are regarded as a separate family group, insufficient in number to constitute a social unit and whose members are placed under the authority of the heads of the villages

/28 cont./

613 where they have chosen to live. It is possible that later, if their
621 number continues to increase, they may found a separate village
571 whose head will be recognized as captain. A new lo would thus be created.

613 Real nature of Boni matrilineal groups. Examination of the situation
614 of the various lineages leads to the following conclusions:
571 — The fact that genealogies are forgotten does not lead to any fractioning of lineages on the material or religious planes.

— The conceptions of the Boni relative to classificatory kinship, as well as their custom hostile toward any discrimination within the lineage, hinder fractioning. When a separation takes place on the plane of residence and authority, it has no repercussion on the common worship which cements the lineage together;

— The fashion in which the law of exogamy is applied does not constitute a valid criterion, the attitude of the various groups in this regard being quite variable;

— No process of assimilation permits integration into the lineage of elements of foreign origin; a process of assimilation of paternally related fragments exists. But this assimilation is not complete, it does not operate on the plane of legal and religious responsibility;

613 — Ultimately, the surest criterion of true common matrilineal
614 origin is unity of legal and religious responsibility, marked by the same kunu. The kunu, transmitted irrevocably by the mother
• 784 whatever may be the conditions of her marriage, weighing collectively on all the members of a lineage and capable of being warded off only by their collective prayers, is the true cement of kin groups.

[571] By its very nature, the kunu opposes any scission of groups. Neither time nor geographical separation can break it.

[621] The example of Dipélu I and II is characteristic in this regard, for its members remain rigorously subject to the same kunu

/28 cont./

613 614 784 [621] although the supposed common ancestress doubtless goes back to the beginning of the 18th century and for three generations they have been divided among four villages situated at a week's distance by boat from one another. We can, with very few chances of error, affirm that they certainly have a common matrilineal origin and that they in fact constitute one lineage.

182 619 [361] [484] On this subject let us note that geographical separation cannot play the same role among the Refugee Blacks as in the African tribes of cultivators. The Refugee Blacks, whose habitat is linear along the banks of the river and who, being boatmen, are continually moving, cannot be completely isolated from one another.

613 614 571 /29/ Under these conditions, how can we explain the existence within certain lineages of individualized fractions subject to a separate kunu, such as Papaïston 2?

One can assume that these fractions do not really have the same origin as the principal group and that they result from a process of assimilation of a paternally related fragment.

We have cited the example of Aneta's descendants (Aw.B.3). They are already integrated into the social life of the group; in two or three generations nobody will remember any longer their exact origin. But they will remain differentiated from the principal fraction of the Awara Bakka because they will still be subject to the kunu of their ancestress. [784]

121 Such are the elements we have been able to draw from a general study of kin groups among the Boni. We shall look for other data in the study of the implantation of these groups on the soil, and especially of the apportionment of lands among them; finally, we shall study family custom and especially inheritance.

A complete understanding of the kinship system and its functioning can be obtained only in the future by following the evolution of kin groups, the formation of new villages; and the designation of new headmen.

/32 cont./

601 The very rigor of this principle seems to have to lead to a
613 scission of the lineages, for one can hardly conceive that people
571 will be willing to address girls younger than themselves as "my
[163] grandmother" and show them respect; now that must necessarily be the case at the end of a certain number of generations, for as we shall see, the fecundity of Boni women sometimes lasts up to the age of 50, and there are cases where the interval between the oldest and youngest child reaches 35 years.

Nevertheless, we have not actually observed that this conception of kinship leads to scissions or even to serious clashes.

That derives from the very nature of the hierarchy and the social ties within the matrilineage; they entail a collective tutelage by one generation over the next, and in the same way a collective tutelage by the ancestors over the living. But for the same reason that every prayer, every invocation addressed individually to such-and-such an ancestor is avoided, the hierarchy of the Refugee Blacks does not give rise to relationships of authority between one man and another, which would not be tolerated. Only the hedemã, or captain, designated by the assembly of the lineage, exerts a personal authority; even so, he is careful to limit it almost exclusively to religious functions.

604 "Uncles" exert collectively an authority over the generation
613 of "nephews." They meet in council, especially on the question of marriages. They do not vote, strictly speaking, but the opposition of three or four of them prevents the carrying out of a project. There is no preponderant voice for the closest uncles (yet in practice this seems to be taken into account). But the eldest of the uncles in the classificatory sense is unanimously recognized as preponderant.

602 Existence of patrilineages. Matrilineages are not the only kin
• 784 groups of the Refugee Blacks. Each one receives from his father
428 a fundamental interdiction -- bwasi kina -- which he will have

/32 cont./

602 784 428 [753] to observe all his life and which he himself will transmit to his children. It is unanimously believed that breaking this interdiction causes leprosy (bwasi).

This interdiction is never transmitted by women. It is transmitted from father to son /33/ or daughter. The son will observe it and transmit it; the daughter will observe it during her lifetime, but she will not transmit it.

602 784 The existence of the bwasi kina divides the Boni into de facto groupings which can be considered as patrilineages. These patrilineages have no name, no head, no organization; their members are dispersed among the various matrilineages and most of them do not know who the others are.

They exist nevertheless and extend throughout all the tribes of Refugee Blacks.

[582] Their importance in the eyes of the Refugee Blacks comes from the fact that they involve a law of exogamy: a man and a woman who have the same bwasi kina cannot marry; that would be pikadu, incest in the broad sense, an offense against exogamy, as much as the union of two members of the same matrilineage.

[262] [578] It is difficult to estimate the number of these patrilineages, which seems to us to be at least 20 among the Boni; actually, the Boni do not willingly tell their bwasi kina, for fear that one of their enemies might mix into their food a fragment of the interdicted food in order to harm them; besides, they do not know their paternal relations beyond their grandfather. Reconstitution of patrilineages by interrogation seems therefore to be illusory.

602 784 262 The bwasi kina we have been able to find out about are all about food. They involve the cayman, the "tiger," the tortoise, the white hen, the pian (awali), the eel. The cayman is often given in addition to another animal. But it is inaccurate to say that the Refugee Blacks have a general interdiction against the cayman.

/37 cont./

583 (this was especially the case with the Afi and Toïna lineages
591 cited above), that does not entail any compensation. It is contrary to custom and disapproved of, but if the wife absolutely insists on leaving her kin she is free to do it. Nothing can be claimed from her husband's lineage.

The usual interpretation of matrimonial compensation, regarded as a mechanism for exchange of women among groups, thus does not seem valid here. If a woman leaves a Boni lineage for good to go and found a family, for example among the Djuka, her descendants are lost to the lineage without any possibility of compensation. Yet this society so deeply rooted in African soil does not make provision for any allowance or payment in such a case.

613 Things are clearer if the lineage is considered not as an
791 effective material grouping but as a spiritual community subject
[829] to the same religious law. In the thought of the Refugee Blacks, the fundamental religious tie which joins the individual to his ancestors in uterine line cannot be broken whatever anyone does.

[591] Wherever she may go, the emigrant woman remains a mem-
[784] ber of the spiritual community; she remains, she and her children, subject to the same kunu. Nor can this religious tie be transferred from the maternal kin group.

581 Understood thus, marriage breaks no spiritual tie, creates
583 none; it thus affords no reason for any compensation.

000 These considerations show that the African "dowry" as conceived by patrilineal societies is not only a mechanism for the exchange of women among materially constituted groups. It can also have as its end, without those concerned even being aware of it, to compensate the spiritual community of the lineage for the loss of the children the woman will bear, their passage to another cult.

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614 An example of scission in a kin group: the separation of Dipélu II
571 between Kormotibo and Asisi. (See Dip. II genealogical table.)
578 This scission resulted from a ridiculous incident: a falling-out which occurred between ○ Alawenchi † (E19) and ○ Bongo (E6) because of a hoe which the first claimed to have been stolen from her by Bongo.

Since neither one would yield, they became really angry and fought. /38/

△ Agosa, head of the lineage, taking the part of Alawenchi, decided to secede and settle in Asisi.

○ Pilè † (F35) and ○ Sésey † (F38) who, their mother being dead, had been raised by Alawenchi, joined them and founded families in Asisi.

[621] This explains the present scission of this group and the bizarre division of its members between Kormotibo and Asisi.
● [784] This scission had no result on the religious plane, unity being maintained by the pitiless tie of the kunu. Nowadays, Captain Poopu's authority is exerted normally on the fraction in Asisi. Relations between the two groups are rather good. /Figs. 5 and 6 appear here./

/39/ CHAPTER III

125 INVENTORY OF THE PEOPLING OF THE BONI VILLAGES

We have tried to take a complete census of the Boni of the Upper Maroni as of January 1, 1958, including for the women the statement of their successive unions and of their children living
[126] and dead. This census is associated with detailed plans of the villages and a study of the territorial implantation of kin groups.

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613 614 In general, one can say that the law of exogamy is maintained firmly within the fractions which know completely their genealogy. Union between classificatory "brothers" and "sisters" belonging to different fractions remains always prohibited in principle, but as for all the institutions of the Refugee Blacks, the prohibition ceases to be observed if fear of suprahuman sanctions weaken... /139/

This is what explains the difference in attitude among the lineages. In the Awara Bakka lineage, people do not remember [784] that marriages between fractions may have been followed by maladies or misfortunes, and for this reason they are no longer feared.

In the Kotika lineage it was the same, but an event which took place in 1958 threw consternation. A young woman, Awini [789] (K1, E37, Boniville), died suddenly, and divination showed that [784] she had been struck down by the kunu for having married her [761] classificatory brother Sintamann (K3, E145, Boniville). However, they belonged to two different fractions and their common relationship was the farthest removed possible in the lineage (tenth-degree relatives).

684 688 784 Pikadu. The offense against exogamy, pikadu (1), incest in the

1. This word appears to come from the Portuguese pecado, sin.

broad sense, is considered an offense against society and against religious law; it exposes the lineage to the vengeance of the gods who exercise the kunu on it. But in the thought of the Refugee Blacks, if incest unleashes the functioning of existing kunu, it [114] does not create new ones. What has been written on this subject by several authors seems inexact to us, at least for the Boni. [761] In the example put forth above Awini's death was attributed to the kunu brought to bear for a long time by the yɔrka of a man assassinated in former times by a member of the lineage.

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684 688 784 This prohibition is of a purely religious nature and does not entail any social sanctions; those concerned are convinced that in such a case a suprahuman sanction would strike them in the form of sickness or accident.

582 [613] Prohibitions limiting marriage. Outside of the great interdiction, pikadu, which is attached to unions within one matrilineage and one patrilineage, two prohibitions limiting marriage are found among the Refugee Blacks, which they express thus:

[595] [587] --I cannot have two wives at the same time in the same lineage. For example I am forbidden to marry two "sisters" at the same time, but if I break with my wife, I may marry her classificatory "sister" or any other woman of the same lineage;

[835] [587] --I may not have relations, even passing ones, with a woman who has been married to my brother by the same mother; in particular, if my brother has just died, I shall not be able to marry his widow.

The Boni are not capable of explaining the deep reasons for these interdictions, but they interpret them as purely social [684] and not religious prohibitions. The offender is simply threatened with being beaten.

[171] The first of these rules seems very widely accepted in Black Africa, as much in patrilineal societies as in a matrilineal system.

[171] The second of these rules is characteristic in the Akan (Agni, Baoulé) culture area and shows that the family custom of the Refugee Blacks is related much more directly to that of the Agni-Ashanti group than to that of the Dahomey.

184 587 114 One can note that this rule is exactly contrary to the Saramaka custom, which obliges the widow to marry one of the brothers of the dead man; this custom has been interpreted by several authors as coming from imitation of the levirate of the Jews, with which certain rebels were acquainted (it is known that among the slaveowners there were many Jews).

/158 cont./

848 If children are born of these irregular liaisons, the mother
[784] takes care to know with certainty who the father is, for if there
[753] were any doubt, the child, respecting a kina which would not be his own, would contract leprosy. On this subject the Boni
842 have a remarkable belief: they think that it is the first man with whom a woman has had relations after the end of a menstrual period who is likely to make her pregnant.

836 These adventures always involve gifts in kind (cloth,
431 jewels); so the men who have the most success with women are always short of money.

581 A woman who has lived thus in notorious fashion has a little more difficulty than another in finding another husband, but if she is young and winsome she succeeds.

548 Prostitution as such is very rare in Boni country, and the women who give themselves over to it openly (three or four for all the villages on the French bank) have generally left the
[836] tribe to settle in the gold miners' villages. Dissoluteness is not considered dishonorable by the Refugee Blacks when it is carried on within the tribe and when it has no other purpose but pleasure; but prostitution is judged shameful.

834 Except for these few prostitutes, we have never heard it
648 said that a Boni woman had relations with a European; on this point tribal discipline is observed with extreme rigor.

581 Conclusion. The average duration of marriages, which was
[178] from 15 to 20 years for the preceding generation, tends to become shorter and can be estimated nowadays at about ten years.
[191] In spite of this evolution, the stability of marriages among the Refugee Blacks remains noticeably greater than that observed
548 among the black populations of South America. Among them is not seen the form of prostitut[illegible] so widespread in South America, the supported mistress who does not work and who lives entirely at the expense of her successive lovers.

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764 767 [613] In principle the forward bearer (who is called bossman by analogy with a boat) must belong to the dead person's lineage. Apart from this restriction, the bearers can be (and are in fact) any people whatever, the only condition required being that they be extremely vigorous, because the load they carry is at the limit of their strength.

Fraud can exist in isolated cases, but in the great majority of cases there is no doubt as to the good faith of the bearers; they give contradictory answers, go ahead and back interminably, until, exhausted, they are raised up again by others. Actually, the interpretation of these automatic movements does not differ essentially from any process of divination.

[766] The dead person is interrogated from the age of four or five years up. If it is a very young child, he is not interrogated; but the causes of his death are sought by interrogating possessed people, and if there is reason to, the kunu is appeased in the same fashion.

764 787 754 At the beginning of the interrogation the tribunal tries to make sure that the dead person was not a wisimã. After sending the bearers to the other end of the village, the president of the assemblage has two young men hidden in huts; then he has the bearers called, saying to the dead person: "I have lost So-and-so and So-and-so, find them." If the dead person was an upright man, he must have acquired a suprahuman clairvoyance permitting him to direct his bearers straight away toward the huts in question. If he was a wisimã, he will be as if blind; his bearers go wandering in vain from hut to hut.

They state that this test always succeeds.

764 787 761 [776] [784] The interrogation proceeds interminably. The causes of death are taken up. The first question is: is it a god who killed you? The answer is nearly always yes, and they proceed by elimination in order to arrive, for example, at learning that it is an Ampuku, that it is the Ampuku borne by So-and-so. By what the kunu was set in motion, how to appease it, is not the

764 /162 cont./
787 business of the tribunal. The people of the dead person's lineage
761 will have to settle that among themselves after the obsequies.
[784] The role of the tribunal is to make official the cause of death and give it the force of law.

764 Then the inheritance is taken up in the presence of the
787 near relatives of the dead man. The questions are asked suc-
428 cessively: "To whom dost thou leave thy boat...?" "To whom dost thou leave thy gun (1)...?" The coffin moves each time

> 1. That, unless the dead man has, before his death, in front of witnesses, formally indicated the apportionment of his belongings; in such a case, questions are asked only for the objects whose attribution had not been clearly specified.

toward one of the people present. /Figs. 22 and 23 appear here/

764 /163/ At the end of the third day after the death the
[789] burial is prepared; the dead person is asked from daybreak on whether he is ready for that; if not it can be postponed until the next day.

[767] The [illegible] have been working at the cemetery since the
[827] beginning of the day. They are young and strong men who have to work slowly, for not a drop of sweat may fall into the grave or their akka would risk remaining prisoner in it.

About 4:00 P.M. the bearers promenade the dead person one last time in the village for a supreme adieu. The near
[534] relatives go to the wharf. The dead man is hoisted into a canoe
[795] while the apinti drum calls his yorka so that it will not remain in the village.

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764 Cemeteries. There are two cemeteries in Boni country: one on the lands of the Dikan lineage for the people living on the French bank, the other downstream from Kotika for the inhabitants of that village. They are ordinary places which nothing indicates from the bank, for they are covered like the rest of the country by secondary forest. The dead are buried there in graves aligned parallel to the river, about seven meters apart. The dead are placed with heads turned toward the river. No separation by lineage exists within the cemetery.

The graves are not marked by any decoration, and at the end of about ten years, the mound having settled down, no trace of the burial remains.

[767] The graves are never cleaned. Only the ɔlɔmã heads, who have received special instruction, know the graves of the principal chiefs and the boundaries of the cemetery.

769 The Boni never go to the cemetery alone and do not
[754] make offerings on the graves of their near relatives. Someone
[755] who would frequent the cemetery alone would be suspected of being a wisimã seeking to capture the yɔrka of a dead person.

764 Even if they are right near the villages, cemeteries are
487 never connected directly to them by paths, and the dead are transported by boat. By proceeding thus they hope to isolate the villages from evil influences.

766 If someone dies by drowning, he is buried away from the cemetery. According to Mr. W. F. van Lier, among the Djuka
[761] all drowned persons are supposed to have been victims of a
[784] kunu; the Boni do not have this conception and declare that they
[184] have lost the meaning of this custom; one notices, however, that they observe mourning for the drowned according to the usual rites.

/175 cont./

765 995 For the duration of the mourning, any indiscretion of the surviving spouse will draw upon him the pitiless vengeance of the yɔ́ka; it is important for him to make himself forgotten, to have a modest and decent demeanor. The dead person might be vexed with him for having kept his health and good looks. So they try to give the surviving spouse the aspect of a miserable 765 995 613 and unfortunate being. The dead person's relatives are particularly interested in having this discipline observed, for in the opposite case the dead person's yɔ́ka would turn back in vengeance against his own lineage. During all the mourning the whole lineage considers itself in danger. So custom requires that during all this period the widower (or widow) be placed under the authority of the dead person's lineage.

765 In the case of concubinage, mourning is taken on by the spouse even if the relations have not been made official. People cite the example of Way (Boniville) who assumed mourning for a Djuka with whom she had begun to live before he could propose to her officially.

765 State of persons in mourning. A widower's state is exactly like [995] that of a widow, which tends to show that in the eyes of the Refugee Blacks the dead, men and women, have the same level of being and the same power over the living.

765 969 613 The surviving spouse is placed under the protection of the ancestors of the dead spouse's lineage. Without this protection assured by the prayers of the members of this lineage, he would find himself defenseless. The proof of it is that the principal sanction against him is to lift the mourning prematurely by going to the fɔ́gɔ tíki to tell the ancestors that one is no longer interested in him. That amounts indirectly to cursing him (see below the example of Gamba).

/180 cont./

765 613 689 An incident. In 1957, the Saramaka Gamba (75 years old), Way's widower (Dip. I), caused a serious incident by refusing several times the obedience he owed to the latter's lineage, on the pretext that he was old and knew how to behave.

His son Maliki (born of a Saramaka woman), whom he was raising, married to Way's daughter, had gone fishing above the Litani. Upon his return, Kwau (80 years old), Way's elder brother, reproached him for having left without authorization, pointing out that his father, Gamba, being placed under his authority by mourning, he was too, because of this fact. Gamba [578] did not accept this reasoning and the two old men fought. This [769] was a fine scandal. Kwau and the elders of Way's lineage came [798] before the fraga tiki of L'Enfant Perdu village to lift his mourning forthwith (which, let us recall, is the equivalent of cursing [784] him by delivering him over to the vengeance of the dead woman's yɔrka).

Members of Way's family went to break up the shacks of Gamba and his son, who lived hidden in the bush for some time. [627] Then Gamba had the village heads intercede and obtained his [769] pardon. The elders of Way's lineage went to the fraga tiki to [798] utter the words putting things back in order.

765 Lifting of mourning. The festival of the lifting of mourning - puu baaka - is celebrated 18 months to two years after the burial. The delay may be a little longer, for most often the village celebrates this festival for several of its dead at the same time. It is a heavy burden, for festivals for lifting mourning attract many people and everyone present must find as much as he wishes to eat and drink.

[621] This festival is celebrated in the framework of the village and not in that of the lineage. It will be celebrated in the same way for a Djuka who died in a Boni village, provided that he lived there a sufficiently long time. In such a case the expenses

/193 cont./

771 824 A currently widespread idea about animism would lead one to think, for example, that before felling a tree a Refugee Black addresses words and offerings to it. That is entirely absent from his thought: either this tree is likely to serve as support for a god, in which case it can be touched only after complex rites having the aim of transferring the god elsewhere, or it is simply a tree, and one cuts it down without further ado.

• 784 825 One very clear aspect of these conceptions is the dagu kunu, a curse resulting from the killing of a dog. Any animal may be killed with impunity but not a dog, because "a dog is almost a man."

[813] At the opposite extreme from the true kunu, a curse extending to a whole lineage, the dagu kunu applies only to the guilty person and draws only limited misfortunes upon him.

[772] No feeling whatever with respect to the dog enters into this conception, but only the idea that he is placed on a particular plane, near the plane of the human and his level of force.

776 /194/ The Great Gods

The Boni recognize a supreme God, Nana (1), more

1. This term comes from the Agni.

commonly called Masa Gadu, and Kedi Amu, Kediampon in Kumenti language. He created the lower gods and all that lives on the earth.

793 Here is how the old Boni men relate the myth of the creation of the world:

God created a brother and sister, Adam and Efa. They were twins. He put them in a place where they lived happily without working. But he forbade them to touch the fruit of the custard-apple tree.

/194 cont./

The great gods Gwangwéla and Gédéosu of the Djuka are not known to the Boni.

Strictly speaking, no cult of Masa Gadu exists. No edifice is reserved for him, he has no priests, and no collective ceremonies are conducted on his behalf. He is nevertheless constantly present in the religious life of the Boni, associated with ancestor worship. Every ceremony of ancestor worship includes an invocation to Masa Gadu. From time to time, for specific motives such as the illness of a member of the lo, people go /195/ specially to the fraga tiki to invoke Masa Gadu. The oldest man of the lo officiates, while a younger one pours a little water and tafia at the foot of the fraga tiki; the elder addresses Masa Gadu in everyday language, in simple terms, in a familiar conversational tone, asking him for the cure of illnesses or the end of calamities. Those present, seated in a semicircle, punctuate the end of the speech with some rhythmical applause, uttering the ritual formula of thanks: "Gaĩ tẽ̃gi tẽ̃gi fi yu, Masa Gadu."

Outside of these ceremonies which hardly go beyond the framework of the lineage, everyone may address Masa Gadu directly by praying aloud, if, for example, he finds himself alone in the bush and prey to an illness. One never addresses Masa Gadu other than for a specific material purpose. Inner prayer for the purpose of spiritual perfection does not exist to our knowledge among the Refugee Blacks.

One applies directly to Masa Gadu when one believes oneself to be the victim of an iniquitous action (see curse). However, although the Refugee Blacks have a very lively sense of justice, they never call Masa Gadu to witness for the cruel and arbitrary vengeances (kunu) which the lower divinities are believed to exercise on them. It is taken for granted that all these divinities do conforms to the role which Masa Gadu has assigned to them and that the suffering they inflict on men is indispensable to the proper working of the universe.

/195 cont./

794 [181] The laws of Odun. The cult of Odun (Odū) is the keystone of the social and religious structure of the Refugee Blacks. It is a very secret cult; its rites are not practiced in the presence of outsiders and all curiosity about it meets with frank hostility. [123] The Boni, who talk rather freely about the cults of possession, are mute on the subject of Odun, and one may spend years among them without even hearing this name uttered.

794 184 The worship of Odun is common to the Boni and the Saramaka (perhaps this is what explains the trustful relations which exist between the two groupings). Among the Djuka it is replaced by the worship of Gwangwéla (Grantata), which has exactly the same functions and rites.

776 Odun is not to be confused with the creator God Nana (Masa Gadu). The myths explaining the relationship of these two entities were not known by our informants, but it is clear that Odun was sent to men by Masa Gadu as legislator and judge.

671 Odun's laws have a profound originality, as much by their content as by the sanctions which accompany them. It is not excessive to speak of a religious and moral doctrine of the Refugee Blacks.

[641] These laws appear in negative form. A certain number of acts and behavior are forbidden to those who have entered the society of the Refugee Blacks by taking an oath which binds 784 them for good and all. Offenders will be punished without the direct intervention of men, by the all-powerful action of Odun, who will kill them or /196/ strike them down with sicknesses. As a general rule, Odun's punishment is death; this is what explains the fear his name inspires.

673 [754] Odun forbids:

--Sorcery, wisi, in the most general sense, that is, any magic action having as its purpose the killing, making ill, and in a general way doing harm to another person.

/196 cont./

[673] [754] [627] --Vengeance; if someone believes himself to be the victim of witchcraft, he must under no circumstances engage in counterwitchcraft or invoke his ancestors against his enemy. He may ask only for the protection of the Yoia. It is Odun who [784] will avenge him by sooner or later killing the evil-doer.

[683] --Violence in any form whatever. It is regarded as a particularly serious offense against the laws of Odun to strike with an armed hand and to make human blood flow (1).

[684]

1. That explains the strictness with which the society of the Refugee Blacks limits the right of punishment granted to the wronged husband, who must strike only with bare fists in front of witnesses, never in the bush nor on the river. Fear of seeing human blood flow explains the reticence of the Boni toward minor surgical operations.

[826] [952]

[641] [586] --Any attack on personal liberty by material or moral coercion; in particular, neither a man nor woman may be constrained to remain in a marriage which has ceased to please him; nobody may be forced to reside here or there.

[832] The forms of magic so popular among West Indians, aimed at capturing a person's love, are for this reason rejected by the Refugee Blacks and considered as a form of wisi.

[769] [754] --Any evocation of the spirits of the dead, even to ask them for protection, other than in the public ceremonies provided for by custom. Thus nobody must go to the cemetery to pray alone on his parents' grave. Whoever would do that would immediately be considered as wusima.

784 /196 cont./

Odun's punishment is not regarded as immediate. It may be delayed for a certain number of years for reasons known to him alone, but it will necessarily take place.

683 783 Violence can be pardoned if the guilty one repents and makes an offering. The reparative offering (for example, if someone has threatened his adversary with a machete or has struck him to the point of making blood flow) is a demijohn of tafiá or a certain quantity of tobacco leaves displayed in Odun's chapel.

754 784 But there is no pardon for the wisimã. Even if men pardon, Odun remains pitiless. Thus nobody can admit being guilty of wisi, for there is no possible reparation; besides, no one would dare beg for Odun's mercy on behalf of a wisimã, for this would be to associate oneself with him and expose oneself to being struck by the god in the same way.

[683] [766] The wisimã *will be killed by Odun, and men will have* to share in the punishing by refusing the body burial in the cemetery and by going to throw it in the bush. If they /197/ refused to obey this law, Odun would consider that they denied his doctrine and would strike them down either in person or by killing any member of the guilty lineage.

Thus, when in 1952 an old woman named A... of the Lapé lineage, who had settled in the Creole village Hermina, died, it appeared that she had wisi, but since she had been living among the Creoles, her near relatives did not dare intervene, and she was buried in the Hermina cemetery. Several [613] years passed without incident, then misfortunes cropped up; deaths which took place in the lineage, especially that of P... (1955) and T... (1957), and an accident that happened to a child in 1958, were recognized as punishments carried out by Odun upon the Lapé lineage.

346 The place of worship of Odun is a tiny chapel near the grand man's house. It contains only a post crudely carved in the shape of a bust, without any decoration.

/198 cont./

167 794 old woman of 90, A...., who died in Asisi in January, 1957. Having lived with Creoles in her youth, she had come back to live in her native village for at least 30 years and had never given occasion for any unfavorable remark. Nevertheless, upon her death it appeared that she had wisi.

701 829 199 Attitude toward Christianity. The Refugee Blacks, who are acquainted better than one might believe with the conceptions of the populations in the midst of whom they live, have a clear feeling of the relationship which exists between their metaphysical and moral conceptions and those of Christianity. They think they worship the same god as the Christians, in a completely different way but just as sound. They have no animosity whatever toward the Catholic and Protestant clergy, and most of them agree willingly to wearing crosses or medals. But they have not the least intention of abandoning their beliefs for that. They do not perceive the contradiction and do not understand that people might want to oblige them to choose.

[199]

851 171 165 799 [688] [273] [784] Like the Creole gold miners, they attach great importance to baptism, considered as an obia protective against the dangers of the bush. On Christmas, 1957 they were strongly impressed by the accidental death of a Djuka Christian living at the Kotika school. He refused to observe mourning for his wife according to the custom of the Refugee Blacks, and used to go to drink in the cabarets of the Creole villages. On Christmas evening, when drunk, he drowned himself. That was attributed to a suprahuman punishment. We heard /199/ the following reflection on this subject: "He was baptized and he drowned himself just the same. That is therefore not worth the trouble."

61 581 571 Actually, the matrilineal structure of the Refugee Blacks and their conception of marriage form an irreducible cleavage, which appears immediately as soon as one leaves the metaphysical conceptions to pass to the plane of practical living.

/200 cont./

787 --Possession is manifested by kinds of trances called gita or kɔmfo, of a varying nature according to the divinity concerned, which sometimes involve phenomena of insensibility and acts impossible to perform in a normal state;

789 792 784 --The first time the divinity enters a man, it imposes a kina (interdiction) upon him which will henceforth be the sign of his function. This is what is called a gadu kina. This kina varies from one divinity to another, but in principle a given divinity imposes the same kina on its divers bearers. The divinity names itself and indicates to its bearer a means of calling it back in case of need: make such-and-such gestures, scatter such-and-such a liquid or powder.

All that is recorded by those present who reveal it to the person possessed when he has come round.

It is taken for granted that the god protects its bearer as long as the latter respects the laws of its cult and observes its kina (in the opposite case the god may punish him cruelly). 787 796 789 428 Conversely it is assumed that the man has a certain power, a certain right over the god who possesses him. They say that he is the master of it, masa, word which is habitually used in the sense "to be the owner of." At his death he can bequeath this god in the forms and according to the laws regulating the inheritance of property. Of course the god is capable of not ratifying this decision, and it is free to manifest itself in anyone it wishes. But they affirm that in most cases it follows docilely the choice of its bearer. We shall see that this inheritance of gods plays an essential role in the functioning of the kunu.

787 181 Apprenticeship for possession. What goals does a man pursue who desires thus to have a gadu? Above all he seeks strength. To succeed in life, to be protected against his enemies, to be respected: Such are the goals generally pursued and openly recognized by the Refugee Blacks who "have a gadu."

/201 cont./

The elders then consulted the oracles and perceived that Mimi was victim of an Ampuku named Maogan which for a very long time had been pursuing the Kotika lineage with its vengeance (kunu). In order to protect herself, she sought to have herself given a more powerful god, and she became the pupil of an obiaman specialist in the cult of the Papa gadu. In this way she had a Papa gadu named Ayaémé, divinity of beneficent character to which, in difficult cases, her family applies in order to obtain advice, protection, and remedies. She had a little hut built beside her house, where the god goes to rest when it has finished each of its trips to the country of men. Ayaémé imposed on Mimi in kina which concerns a fish. But even with all this she was not rid of her kunu of the Ampuku; and one day, something it had not yet done, the latter revealed itself in her and spoke through her mouth. It announced that it would continue to exercise its kunu against the Kotika lineage. They appeased it by sacrifices of red cloth and beer; since then, it seems calm and in rather good humor. It comes into Mimi from time to time and speaks in Saramaka language. They are very afraid of it, but they do not hesitate to question it and ask it for remedies, which it sometimes indicates. It laid on Mimi three gadu kina concerning the acouchy, the agami, and the armadillo.

Organization of the cults of possession. Strictly speaking, no religious brotherhoods exist in Boni country; there are only teachers - bas(2) - who have received their power from another

2. It does not seem advisable to translate this word by "priest." In the minds of the Refugee Blacks, this is a matter of a teacher teaching pupils; they use the same word to designate a European or Creole schoolmaster.

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776 --The Bïnsuŋki, which have the appearance of Indian
789 women and which reside in the waters of the rivers;
825 The second category is that of the Ampuku, much feared
[784] gods of the bush, likely to exercise the kunu against men. The
[198] Ampuku speak a language which is very well known to the Saramaka but which nobody speaks in Boni country. When they wish to be understood they speak the ordinary Saramaka dialect. They can, it is said, /204/ be seen at night in the bush in the form of unknown men dressed in the manner of the Refugee Blacks;

The third category is that of the Vɔɔdï or Papa gadu, gods still more feared, which become incarnate in the boa snake
[198] dagowe. They speak the Papa language;
776 Finally, much feared also are the Kïntamasu, gods of
789 the termitaries, which speak a language which nobody under-
[198] stands and use the Kumenti language to make themselves understood.

It is important to note that there is not a god Kumẽnti, a god Ampuku, etc., as there was in the pantheon of the Ancients a god Mars, a god Vulcan. For the Refugee Blacks those are generic names like Frenchman, Englishman. Questioned about a phenomenon of possession, they will answer: "It is Ampuku who makes," but in the same way they would say in front of a boat: "It is Saramaka who makes."

776 The relationships between these gods and their animal
789 form are obscure. For the Vɔɔdï it is clear that people believe
825 they really live in the dagowe snakes, since the accidental death of one of these snakes in the burning of a clearing is considered a calamity which risks bringing a kunu. But that does not prove that a divine character is attributed to the snake itself. As for the Kumẽnti, there does not appear to be any precise bond between the genie and its jaguar appearance. If one meets a jaguar, one may fire on him all the same without inconvenience. If he is the support of a Kumẽnti, the shot will not be able to touch him, the god will not get angry about it.

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776 787 825 This shows that in the minds of the Refugee Blacks, the animal is simply a prop for the god. The god borrows this body in order to manifest itself, but it is not bound to it by nature. These conceptions are totally contrary to those of the Indians, who tend to personify in their minds the beings and phenomena of nature.

776 787 As we have said, the Boni do not see these gods since the person possessed loses consciousness. But in the time of the ancestors, there were people who used to see the gods, and it is through them that their present-day descendants have an idea of their appearance; on the other hand, certain gods such as the Ampuku and the Bünsuki may be seen in dreams.

Sometimes the residence of this or that god is known, for it has revealed it through the mouth of its bearer; the god's [823] name is then given to that place. For example, at the mouth of the Abounami there is a fall named Ma Akoti Gadu Suia. It is there that the god resides which revealed itself in olden days in an old woman named Akoti.

776 613 Connections with the group of relatives. The idea of a god protector of the lineage, whose worship, brought by the founder of the group, is regarded as indispensable to the life of the collectivity, is not found clearly among the Refugee Blacks. There are actually many divinities which have entered the lineage and which are worshiped collectively. But these di- [184] vinities are intruders; they have penetrated into the group by force in order to exert an inexorable vengeance against it. [782] People do not apply to them to ask for protection, and they are worshiped only because they cannot be expelled.

776 602 /205/ There is not believed to be any kinship tie between the gods and men, nor any tie of a systematic or exclusive character.

/205 cont./

796 613 428 [787] Still, they assume that the gods that have entered a matrilineage tend to be transmitted within this group. If, for example, a woman is possessed by a Papa gadu, at her death she must bequeath it in the same way as her property, and she can bequeath it only to someone of her lineage.

We have seen in studying the transmission of the god of Kotoïda († 1956), that only the women of the Afi lineage to which she belonged could inherit.

796 613 784 Even if the god is not bequeathed, which sometimes happens, if it exercises the kunu, it will manifest itself sooner or later in a member of the lineage. But long years may pass before it shows itself. This conception is absolutely clear to the Refugee Blacks, and furthermore, if it did not exist, the [114] [428] idea of the kunu would be without support. People have therefore wrongly believed in a transmission of gods from father to son.

346 787 794 613 Material organization of cults. A material organization of the cults of possession exists within the limits of the localized lineage (lo). This organization is completely independent of the apprenticeship of these cults. It permits the members of the lineage to easily practice cults they have received anywhere, on their own responsiblity.

In each lo there exists in general one single chapel (obia ɔsu) for all the divinities of the same category.

For example in the Awara Bakka lo quarter in Asisi (140 persons), for about 15 women having a Papa gadu, there exists only a single one. There is an obia ɔsu for the Ampuku (three or four possessed persons) and another for the Kumẽnti (about ten possessed people).

The chapel of the Papa gadu is placed under the responsibility of the head of the lo. On this subject it is to be noted that the individualized lineages Aw.B.3 and Afi, which however have separate gods, are included in this organization.

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787 784 If someone has a Kumẽnti, certain objects used in the cult: pestle, mortar, machete, must not be raised near him. His gita "would rise" immediately. Likewise while he is eating, neither tiger nor gun must be mentioned. To prevent their gita from rising, those concerned may take the precaution of putting a small piece of wood behind the ear while they eat.

787 178 [791] 781 [484] [743] [755] These past years the cult of the Kumẽnti was clearly declining among the Boni, as was the whole of their religious life; every one, indeed, no longer thought about anything but earning money and was always traveling in order to do this, which made difficult the indispensable meetings and dances. On the other hand, cared for effectively when they are ill in the Maripasoula hospital, the Boni feel the cult of the Kumẽnti less necessary, of which the principal social function is to cure. So, while in 1948 we used to be present very often at manifestations of the gita of Kumẽnti, in 1952 they were becoming much rarer and more secret /modest/. They were tending to fall to the level of the latent manifestations of which we shall speak further on. In 1956 we did not observe in the course of the forest [346] work any spontaneous attack of this gita. The chapels dedicated to the Kumẽnti are scarcely maintained and are falling into ruins; such is the fate of the gods judged benevolent toward men.

[751] Nevertheless people continue to lay great store by the ɔbia of Kumẽnti, especially the man nẽŋge ɔbia which protects against the machete and the gun, and the Kumẽnti bui, ring of Kumẽnti, instrument of divination.

776 [823] [787] The Būnsuŋki. The Būnsuŋki are gods which live in the waters, by preference at the head of falls, beside rocks bearing copses of detached trees; they can also reside ordinarily in these trees themselves. They appear sometimes in dreams to men as well as to women in the aspect of Indians, more commonly Indian women with long hair. This is why they are sometimes called wata Iŋgi, Indians of the water.

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776 [825] The Bumba gadu, other gods of the same nature and equally feared, have as bearers other categories of snakes, principally the great anaconda water snakes.

● [784] [812] The Vɔɔdū, we have said, are feared; they can exercise on a lineage the collective curse called kunu. But, no more than the Kumēnti do not represent a principle of good, they do not represent a principle of evil. Not all are so badly disposed toward men, and even if one of them is the enemy of a lineage, it is not for that reason badly disposed toward the rest of men.

787 178 [562] However this may be, the cult of possession of the Papa gadu is not at all in decline among the Boni. According to the cross-checking we have been able to do, of the 670 persons living on the French bank there are at least 40 to 50 who have a Papa gadu, the great majority of them old women.

787 784 /211/ The Voodū /sic/ are much feared, and for that very reason much respected. They are oracles which are consulted very often, without consideration of the evil their kunu has done and will still do. A god which exercises the kunu but which is provisionally declared appeased may be consulted without danger; it is always assumed that in any case its bearer, if he respects its commands, has nothing to fear from it.

787 562 It is possible that, very unconsciously, women use the fear that the Papa gadu gods inspire in order to maintain their independence and privileged position in Refugee Black society.

153 79 787 [198] [178] [515] [824] [534] Instruction in possession appears to take as a pattern the same principles as that which correspond to the Kumēnti. It involves the teaching of the Papa language; this language appeared to us to be in decline; in fact, it is used only for formulas of greeting; then the possessed people vaticinate in ordinary language. Instruction in possession also involves daily ablutions with decoctions of leaves; certain of these mixtures are particularly complicated (it is said that they include more than a hundred different kinds of leaves). Instruction is essentially individual; however it also includes dances; on this occasion a

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755 [753] [784] [824] is answering in ordinary language the questions posed. The sick boy's mother asks the god if it is really he who made her son ill. He answers that it is he and gives two reasons: first, a week before, Féni damaged with a blow of he machete the root of a silk-cotton tree in which precisely he himself was living; moreover, his sister Pamasa was sick for 15 days, he did not go to visit her.

The mother begs the god: "Ubegi yu, yu abi leti, gi ɛŋ paadɔ, a 'ã be sabi bũ-bũ. (We beg you, you are right (but) pardon him, he had not realized wel /what he did/.)"

Then the god directs a treatment: an infusion of a certain number of leaves, with which the sick boy will wash his body. It states that the sick boy will quickly get well.

Pamasa then comes back to her ordinary state. The scene has lasted about three-quarters of an hour n all.

164 Observation in Asisi, October, 1956.

On October 21 at 8 o'clock I am toll that Bugi, a woman of about 45, is gravely ill; she suffers fron violent pains in the chest and a general tremor. The sick woman is stretched out on the ground, supported by her brother and surrounded by old women who are comforting her. She appears to suffer atrociously, her body is covered with sweat, her lower limbs are agitated with an incessant trembling; she presents the symptoms of a 755 heart attack (2). In front of the house, the ɔbiaman are

2. Bugi had already been hospitalized in Maripasoula for a heart attack.

preparing a "remedy," /213/ for they suspect that this is a question of a manifestation of the Papa gadu of which Bugi is the bearer.

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755 A stalk of sɔŋgaafu twice bent in an elbow is arranged on the ground. A cross is traced in the dirt.

Centered on the cross is placed a large basin into which is poured infusions of leaves taken from several calabashes.

The sick woman, still prostrate and groaning, is seated on a stool facing the basin. The contents of the basin are poured slowly over her body while she is massaged. It is not a question of a remedy in the literal sense of the word; the sick one is "washed" to help the god to manifest itself in her.

I notice that while going back into the hut she trembles almost no more; the attack seems to be subsiding.

In the meanwhile someone comes to call me elsewhere and I cannot come back until half an hour later. I find the sick woman standing, smeared with pemba, in the middle of a meditative audience. The god has descended into her and is expressing itself in Papa language while she dances with slow gestures.

[787]

[753] [784] I am told that it has just given the explanation of the illness: it struck Bugi because she did not observe the kina given to all bearers of Papa gadu, to stay away from funeral ceremonies. Now, the day before yesterday, she had knowingly participated in the tukka dance around Kotoïda's coffin.

The obiaman present beg the god to pardon, which it does after claiming a bottle of beer which it drinks through the mouth of its bearer.

152 164 753 784 Observation in Kormotibo, December 18, 1957.

On December 18 in the evening I find the village of Kormotibo in the clutches of terror. Several persons are sick from the effect of the kunu. Apaita, a young woman, has an enormous whitlow, following an accident; two women have been stricken with pneumonia.

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753 These misfortunes are attributed to the kunu exercised
•784 by a Papa gadu god, since about a hundred years ago an ancestress named Akonté involuntarily killed a dagɔwe snake
[787] while fishing /nivrant/ a creek. In our day this god manifests itself in Atama (Dip. II, E1), and another Papa gadu, which says it is the descendant of the first, manifests itself in Apaita
[755] (F9). It is the latter which, speaking through the mouth of Apaita, revealed that it was striking the village because nobody had danced for it for five years.

755 They called B..., obiaman specialized in the vɔɔdũ cult. He surrounded the chapel of the Papa gadu with stalks
[789] of sãʔgaafu placed vertically. He prepared an infusion of leaves with which the Kormotibo women who have a Papa gadu have just smeared themselves (they are four in number, including two outsiders to the Dipélu II lineage). It is a question of helping their gods to manifest themselves.

People are going to dance eight nights running, part of the night. The agida drum drawn out of the chapel is set up in working position. /214/

The rites carried out to neutralize the kunu are:

--Cleaning of the chapel;

--Decoration by means of stalks of sãʔgaafu placed upright all around /it/;

--Bathing of the sick with leaves believed to have the power of making the influence of the Papa gadu go away;

--With other leaves, on the contrary concentrating the maleficent influence of the Papa gadu in a calabash which is then carefully shut up in the chapel.

787 Possession by the Ampuku. It is much more rare, and personally we have observed it only twice; the possessed people make circles of genipa around their eyes and draw kinds of ovals on

/217 cont./

If someone marries a girl, he must not only pay her mother the price of virginity but must also pay the girl's akka. For that he offers white beads and cloth which the bride will wear, as well as sweets which will be consumed by her. If the price of virginity were not paid, the woman's akka, humiliated, might make her sick or kill her.

/218/ There are seven categories of akka, masculine and feminine, one for each day of the week.

Crevaux in 1877 was able to establish the complete list (1):

1. This conception is widespread in the Agni-Ashanti culture area, among the Ewé and Mina, and as far as western Dahomey. The names reported among the Mina correspond very exactly, except for some differences in pronunciation, to the ones kept by the Boni.

	Men	Women
Sunday	Kwasi	Kwasiba
Monday	Kɔdyo	Adyuba
Tuesday	Kwami	Abeniba
Wednesday	Kwaku	Akuba
Thursday	Yao	Yaba
Friday	Kɔfi	Afiba
Saturday	Kwamina	Amba

All these names are known to the Boni, but none of our informants was capable of reciting the complete list. It is well understood that a name like Kɔfi, Kɔdio /sic/, etc. is the akka's name and not at all the man's name (2).

/218 cont./

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2. Although it happens that people receive as a name an akka name, sometimes accompanied by a qualificative, such as Lébikwaku.

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[551] Actually, each one knows his akka's name, which was revealed to him by his parents when he was a child; to this name is attached an akka kina or food prohibition relative to the akka.

[754] Both are carefully kept secret even from near relatives and friends, for knowing them could help the wisimŋ take possession of the akka. On this subject people often use the term gadu kina, as they say mi gadu instead of mi akka. This term is

[784] easily confused with the prohibition imposed on the possessed

[787] person by the god which incarnates itself in him; these are two very different notions.

[858] The akka kina is unique for each man. It is sought by

[787] the parents when the child is completely weaned. They try to draw parallels between the foods he has eaten and the health disorders he may exhibit, and these suppositions are confirmed by divinatory procedures.

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782 A man does not ordinarily pray to his akka. He addresses prayer to it only if he is sick, to ask it for protection, or before leaving on a long trip, to ask it to watch over him. If he comes back safe and sound, he thanks it by making an offering to it, in the form of a bottle of syrup (switi sopi), which he turns upside down over his head.

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184 According to Mr. W. F. van Lier, the Djuka have the idea that the shadow (kaaka) is the visible image of the akka; the Boni do not appear to have this conception; one does not observe that they attach any importance whatever to whether a man's shadow passes over them; on the contrary, one must not step over a man lying on the ground, that might injure his akka.

/219 cont./

769 We have described the principal ceremonies of this worship in speaking of family life.

769 613 One addresses only his near ancestors in maternal line, and one addresses them all collectively. Just as the custom of the Refugee Blacks rejects all that might individualize one line within a lineage, it rejects every individual bond between a given dead person and a given living person. Just as "uncles" exercise guardianship collectively over "nephews," the dead collectively protect the living. It would be a grave offense against the customary law of the Refugee Blacks to go individually to the fraga tiki to invoke the yɔ́kɔ of one or another of his relatives. We shall see further on that the only exception to this is for the ancestors who have made themselves conspicuous by exercising the kunu against another lineage.

[784]

Ancestor worship is organized within the lo, and its priest is the head of the lo, hedemɛ́ or captain. Individualized fractions (bee) which may exist within the lo, like Papaïsson 2, have no separate ancestor worship.

769 778 The place of prayer is made up of a small square of ground about 1 meter x 1 meter, separated from village soil by pieces of boards; in the middle of this square is set a T-shaped post whose horizontal arm serves as support for a square of white cloth: this is the fraga tiki.

The cloth rots rapidly under the influence of bad weather, but it is not removed; a new one is attached over the old when it is too spoiled; likewise /220/ the post, which ends up by rotting, is not replaced as long as it does not fall to the ground. This behavior might be thought to be negligence, but it is nothing of the sort: for the Refugee Blacks, what has been offered to the ancestors is removed from the action of men; no one can touch it any more, even to repair it.

/220 cont./

769 778 782 her voice changed, imitating a man's; eyes staring, she appeared to have no longer any consciousness of what was around her. Then suddenly the attack would cease and she would busy herself with her household occupations in the most natural fashion. The yɔ́ka which was believed to become incarnate thus in Mili's body spoke of very commonplace things, repeating indefinitely sentences concerning minor happenings of the day, or asking for a small offering of tafia on its behalf at the fɔ́gɔ́ tíki. A psychiatrist would doubtless have thought of an attack of mental dissociation.

• [784] These yɔ́ka are not feared by their involuntary bearer, since none can exercise a kúnu against his own lineage; they manifest themselves only exceptionally, sometimes indicating remedies or warning of dangers. Thus it is that A... of the Dipéu II lo, who has a Kumɔ́ɔti besides, also has a yɔ́ka which revealed itself in him without ever having been called on. According to his comrades, this yɔ́ka sometimes steps in with a cavernous voice, notably in September, 1952, during a hunting expedition, where it shouted: "Let us not go that way, we shall meet a jaguar." A... lost consciousness for only a few seconds and had not been aware of anything. /Figs. 26 and 27 appear here./ /221/

795 828 The nɛ̃́mɔ́ɔki (1). Each Refugee Black has a nɛ̃́mɔ́ɔki, that is

1. This word seems to be a deformation of English "namesake" (homonym).

to say that certain elements of his personality are thought to originate from the reincarnation of a certain ancestor. This is a very obscure conception with the Boni, and without apparent correlation with their notion of the akka and the yɔ́ka; they never say: "I am the reincarnation of So-and-So," but simply:

/221 cont./

Relations between Gods and Men

• 784 613

The kunu

The kunu. The Refugee Blacks call kunu the collective curse which has weighed on a matrilineage since an ancient offense. The kunu is without time limit, without pardon, without pity, blind in the choice of its victims; in principle, it can end only with the complete extermination of the lineage. Each time [753] [761] that adversity swoops down on one of its members in the form of death, sickness, various calamities, the kunu is the most frequently obtained explanation. The instrument of this inexpiable vengeance is either a god or the yoka (spirit) of a dead person.

784 613 171 This notion, which occupies a central position in the beliefs of the Refugee Blacks, does not appear to have been borrowed directly. Most of the populations of Dahomey /222/ and the Ivory Coast take for granted the idea of arbitrary punishments exercised upon the members of the lineage by the gods or the ancestors of the group. But no population of these regions has, to our knowledge, developed so highly systematized a doctrine.

784 571 The conceptions developed by the Refugee Blacks, divinities impelled exclusively by vengeance, and especially ancestors inexorably chastising lineages other than their own, have created new relationships among individuals and among lineages.

784 We have not been able to elucidate the origin of the word kunu. Perhaps it is a deformation of the Mina word ekunu, which means burial.

776 784 781 Three categories of divinities can pursue men with their kunu, and because of this fact the Refugee Blacks feel toward them an extreme terror mixed with veneration.

/222 cont./

--The Papa gadu (V'pdf). The kunu that one of them exercises upon a lineage comes uniformly from the fact that in times past, one of the ancestors had inadvertently killed a dagowe snake (boa), usual bearer of the Papa gadu. For example, the snake might have perished in the burning of a clearing. Some time after, the god had possessed a member of the lineage and revealed that henceforth it would exercise a kunu;

--The Ampuku. The kunu of an Ampuku begins in an analogous way; in days gone by an ancestor had, for example, cut a kaku tree without performing the rites suitably, or had made a clearing in a place where an Ampuku was residing;

--The Kintamasu (who call themselves Aa'pio), gods of the termitaries, much feared, may exercise a kunu if, before cutting a clearing, someone has, in spite of all his searching, allowed a termitary to escape him, which thus was not the object of the indispensable rite;

--Finally, the kunu may be brought by a dead person's y'pka. For example, a man of lineage A had once upon a time unjustly accused a man of lineage B. The latter committed suicide out of revenge. The meaning of this act is not the same as in Europe. It is not a question of making one's enemies live in shame and remorse, but by sacrificing one's life to cause an eternal vengeance to be wreaked upon one's enemies. Some time after the suicide, the y'pka reveals itself in a man of his lineage and announces that it will pursue the members of lineage A eternally with its kunu.

Thus the offenses which the kunu punishes are not moral sins as we understand them, but involuntary acts without inner meaning. The purifications and sacrifices demanded are likewise purely exterior acts.

/222 cont./

114 784 The various works treating of the Refugee Blacks point out well the importance of the kunu, but it seems to us that the functioning of this institution (for in fact a social institution is certainly concerned here) has not been clearly understood.

784 613 (549) A kunu is attached to a matrilineage in the literal sense. It extends obligatorily to all the members of the matrilineage and can strike only them.

For example, my kunu can strike my sister's son but not my wife nor my children (they are subject to the kunu of their own lineage). /223/

[782] The kunu, striking the lineage as a whole, can be appeased only by prayers uniting (at least in principle) the whole lineage. That is the respect in which the kunu may be defined [591] as a social institution, for it is, we shall see, the principal cement holding the groups together.

The unleashing of a kunu does not necessarily and immediately follow the destruction of a termitary or the death of a dagowe snake. The god thus offended avenges itself by making a certain number of members of the lineage sick and 784 by causing limited misfortunes to happen. When things are 613 at that point the kunu can still be exercised by prayers and 782 offerings. In 1957 the beginning of a kunu was manifesting itself thus in the Awara Bakka lineage of Asini; very frightened, the members of the lineage made offerings and prayers to exorcise it.

784 But if the lineage people neglect the warnings of the god, 613 if through laziness or selfishness too great a number of them [673] are absent from the collective prayers and do not take part in [641] the offerings, prayers and offerings will be refused and the god will kill one of them. From then on the kunu is unleashed and can no longer leave the lineage. Its involuntary bearer [428] will have to bequeath it upon his death to a member of the lineage, who cannot refuse this legacy and must immediately

/223 cont./

784 613 428 begin his instruction in order to become a suitable bearer. (If this procedure were not carried out, the god would not cease its kunu at all, and the possibility of entering into contact with it and appeasing it would be lost. Besides, sooner or later it would come back into a member of the lineage.)

784 613 [602] The kunu strikes without regard to kinship ties, even if kinship between the bearer of the god and the supposed victim is very distant. Ex.: The Papa gadu of Donasi (Papaïston lo) struck a young woman, Gou, with illness in January, 1957. [782] [361] Donasi and Gou are only relatives in the ninth degree. The members of the entire Papaïston lineage assembled to supplicate the god: even people of Wétiti village in the lower Maroni came.

775 784 613 The kunu exercised by the yɔrka of a dead person has a special importance in the eyes of the Refugee Blacks, for it has profound repercussions on the relations among the lineages.

[428] In principle, the yɔrka exercising a kunu has as bearer a living member of its own lineage, who will bequeath it at his death. But it is also possible that the yɔrka may take as bearer a member of the lineage upon which it exercises the kunu.

[782] In both cases, the rite to appease the yɔrka is the same; the yɔrka can be invoked effectively only by the members of its own lineage, since one can pray (at least in principle) only to one's own maternal ancestors.

When matrilineage A is struck by the kunu exercised by a yɔrka of matrilineage B, its members thereupon go to consult the elders of matrilineage A /sic/ and ask them to try to calm [769] [778] [787] the anger of their ancestor. The members of lineage A assemble around the fraga tiki of lineage B, in back of the elders of this lineage, in the presence of the bearer of the yɔrka, who calls on his gita, goes into trances and prophesying. The yɔrka [782] usually asks for an offering of cane juice and tafia, which is made at the foot of the /224/ fraga tiki by the elders of lineage B (for the rite to be efficacious, the offering must have been furnished by lineage A).

/224 cont./

775 784 769 778 613 A yɔrka exercising a kunu may also demand that another smaller fraga tiki be erected for it beside the principal fraga tiki of its lo. In the villages of the Refugee Blacks one often sees these little crosses provided with white veils like the main fraga tiki, planted beside it a little obliquely.

725 784 674 The notion of the kunu exercised by a yɔrka explains the rarity of murder among the Refugee Blacks. How would you dare to kill someone when, as soon as it is freed from his body, his yɔrka will have full latitude to make you sick, to make tree branches fall across your path, to cause to suffer and to kill all those dear to you? If someone is blinded by hate, it is the idea of suicide which will dominate him. In October, 1952 we were able to observe this reaction in a man who had just been subject to a deep humiliation: "I am going to kill my body in order to go to kill that man and his whole family," he said to us, prey to a fit of rage; fortunately, when the fit had passed, he came back to a more sound outlook on things.

775 784 613 696 [191] It is to be noted that a yɔrka cannot exercise a kunu against its own lineage. This notion explains why, in the times when they exercised absolute authority, tribal chiefs had those condemned to death executed by men of the same lineage. Apparently similar practices were the rule in olden days in several African kingdoms, which allows one to think that notions analogous to those of the kunu may be rather widespread there.

784 613 Situation of the various lineages with respect to the kunu. There we touch on one of the most secret aspects of the social life of the Refugee Blacks. Years of living among them are necessary in order to obtain precise information on the nature and the mode of action of the kunu acting on the various lineages.

784 613 428 Nearly all the entities which now exercise their kunu on the Boni have been in their lineages since a very ancient period, to the point where the name of their first bearer is forgotten. They are transmitted inexorably from generation to generation. In the course of the ages, the kunu have accumulated, and now certain lineages are living with four, five, or even six kunu.

/224 cont./

784 Kunu of the Dju lineage. The Dju lineage in 1958 was affected
613 by four kunu:
776
789 --An Ampuku which has exercised its vengeance since time immemorial, to the point where the origin of this kunu is no longer remembered, its bearers being Dabisa (G25) and Adyódya (E19), two women about 50 years old. This Ampuku formerly had as its bearer an ancestor named Agoabuchi, who died about 1940. Two or three years after his death, it manifested itself in Dabisa;

--A Papa gadu named Adawa which has also pursued the lineage with a pitiless vengeance since the time of the great ancestors. It revealed itself to the preceding generation in an ancestress named Sapiké (D5), and a long time after her death it passed into Pamasa (E26), a woman of 35. This kunu has grown worse since /225/ two other Papa gadu revealed themselves in recent years in two women named Kulina (F9) and Diana (E9). They declared that they were the descendants of the first one and that they came in support of it;

784 --A yaka whose name nobody wanted to tell us because
613 they were so afraid of it. It is that of a man of the Awara Bakka
775 lineage, who committed suicide two or three generations ago
787 when he was unjustly accused of a crime by a man of the Dju
562 lineage. Since then, this yaka has been exterminating the Dju lineage little by little. Its bearer in 1958 was an old woman of the Awara Bakka lineage, named Namu;

784 --A Kantamasu since, a very long time ago, an ancestress
613 whose name is forgotten inadvertently destroyed a termitary
776 while burning a clearing. It has as bearer a very old woman
787 named Wima (E3) († 1957), and it manifested itself also in Ata (F2).

784 Thus, in this group, the malefficent gods had exclusively
613 women as bearers; out of about 20 adult women, seven were
787 participating in the functioning of the kunu.
562

/225 cont./

784 613 787 562 One sees from this example how the influence of women, exerted in arbitrary fashion, in a domain placed outside of custom and ordinary social life, weighs on the life of the group.

779 619 571 Kunu of the Dipélu lineage. The situation of the Dipélu lineage with respect to the kunu is particularly interesting. Although split for perhaps 100 years into two separate groups, Dipélu I (L'Enfant Perdu and Apatu villages) and Dipélu II (Kormotibo and Assi-Dip. II villages), this group still constitutes an undivided unit with respect to the kunu. Neither time nor distance (it takes more than a week of traveling to make the round trip between L'Enfant Perdu and Apatu) has been able to break it up. The Apatu people come very often (at least some of them) to be present at the collective prayers which take place at L'Enfant Perdu to appease a kunu in order to cure a sick person. [484] [955]

779 614 224 [987] The oldest kunu ("since Africa") is that of a Papa gadu god whose victim was ○ Dika (Dip. I. D10, † 1951) and which passed after her death into ○ Pééchina (Dip. I. E42, L'Enfant Perdu village). This kunu strikes indiscriminately the people of L'Enfant Perdu, Apatu, Kormotibo, Assi-Dip. II, and the Dipélu fraction residing in Bonaville. To it, these past years, have been attributed the death of ○ Way (Dip. I. E8, living in Bonaville), the illness of △ Akwali (Dip. II. F7, Kormotibo village) and of ○ Bongo (same village). [761] [753]

779 778 614 [1013] Another very old kunu is the one exercised by the yaka of a Surinam Creole who had settled with the Dipélu people a very long time ago. He was suspected of sorcery and killed. Since then his yaka comes back regularly to exterminate the Dipélu.

/225 cont./

784 Having no known lineage (his family, if he had any, was
786 in Surinam), it had taken people of the Dipélu lineage as
614 bearers. The last was △ Denis † in 1938. Since Denis'
787 death, it no longer has a bearer. The questioning of the dead reveals that they died by its kunu. The members of the two
[782] fractions of the lineage meet together (at least two or three members of each village come) to supplicate it.

784 A third kunu, very interesting in origin and supposed
614 action, /226/ in 1957 was borne by Kwau (Dip. I. E1. Kotika village). It results from the killing of an anaconda snake by Apatu † (Dip. I. C1), companion of the explorer Crevaux when he was traveling to /in/ Brazil. Upon contact with Europeans Apatu had become a freethinker and was no longer
[153] observing the laws of his people. Among the later victims of
[155] this kunu was counted Kwami (Dip. II. F4. Kormotibo village) who, gravely ill, had had to go to L'Enfant Perdu where the
[161] god had been invoked for him and offerings made. The death of Manga (Dip. I. E5. Bonsville. † about 1930) was particularly attributed to it.

No other kunu has revealed itself in Apatu village since its founding in 1882.

784 A fourth kunu concerning all the Dipélu has as bearers
614 women of the Dipélu II group. It results from the inadvertent
786 murder of a Papa gadu whose bearer was a dagowe snake killed
787 in the course of the nivrée /fishing/ of a pool by Akonté
522 † (Dip. II. B1), transmitted to Kondo † , then to Alama (Dip. II. E1).

Since then Papa gadu have revealed themselves in ○ Apalta (Dip. II. F9. Kormotibo village) and in ○ Kaala (Dip. II. G28. Asipi-Dip. II village). They declared themselves to be the descendants of the first and to come in support of it.

/226 cont./

784 182 Finally, a fifth kunu is threatening to show itself. This is a remarkable affair which clarifies at the same time the legal and religious conceptions of the Refugee Blacks.

672 About 1918, a stupid accident which happened at Dagouédé (gun which went off by itself at the moment when it was being stowed in a boat) caused the death of a girl, Santonia, daughter of Kuluba (Aw.B.1). The unwitting perpetrator of the accident was Kwau (Dip. I. Apatu village). (692) There were people in the Awara Bakka lineage who accused him of having done it on purpose, but the grand man judged that he was innocent and the affair was shelved.

784 614 795 787 Now in April, 1957, Kiboya (Dip. II), a young woman of 25, was attacked by a fit of possession. It was Santonia's yɔkka which was supposed to reveal itself in her. It declared that it was going to exercise a kunu on Dipélu. It was not claiming that Kwau had killed her on purpose and even asked the Awara Bakka not to make reprisals.

628 614 Nevertheless, full of fury, a party of Awara Bakka went the next day to attack the village of L'Enfant Perdu, demolishing a certain number of huts and pursuing the inhabitants, some of whom took refuge in the water and others in the bush. There were, however, no serious blows.

The next day they went to attack Kormotibo in the same way. It is to be noted that only after that did they think of blaming Kwau, who was then living at Wacapou. But the grand man had intervened in the meantime to re-establish peace.

In both cases the façades of several shacks were smashed and two men, Bonana and Amatodja, who had run less fast than the others, were struck symbolically.

/226 cont./

628 614 784 787 152 768 778 The members of the Dipélu lineage did not believe a word of this affair, convinced that Kiboya, a proud and scheming woman, had pretended the gita to make herself interesting. Nevertheless, to bring back peace, they decided to go to Asisi and to ask pardon in front of the fraga tiki, pouring tafia, asking the ancestors not to take vengeance, the living being reconciled.

784 614 795 /227/ (Note that in this affair, the yɔ́ka manifests itself in a member of the lineage on which it exercises the kunu.)

784 614 613 Kunu of the Awara Bakka lineage. The Awara Bakka lineage does not form a unit with respect to the kunu, and the situation of its fractions is particularly interesting. This lineage includes:

--A principal fraction (Aw.B.1);

--A fraction whose kinship ties with the first are forgotten (Aw.B.2), whose position with respect to the kunu we have not been able to define.

--Finally, a group descended from Anèta, Djuka woman, wife of *Pétyon* † (Aw.B.1) settled in Asisi with her descendants in uterine line. We have called this group Aw.B.3. It has a separate kunu originating in the Djuka village of Tabiki where Anèta came from.

784 787 796 613 428 The Awara Bakka I. all living in Asisi village, had to our knowledge three kunu in 1957:

--One exercised by a Papa gadu god, borne up to 1957 by O Kuisiba (Aw.B.1, D1). At her death in April, 1957, she bequeathed it, contrary to custom, to a person of another fraction, Suemma (Aw.B.3). But the god did not ratify this legacy and, in January, 1958, it manifested itself in O Léna (Aw.B.1, FSD), thus remaining in the same lineage;

/227 cont./

784 --A second, very old kunu is exercised by a yɔ́tka of the
225 Dipélu II lo. Gy.... dead so long that he cannot be placed on
227 the genealogical table; it, too, had as bearer a member of the
613 lineage on which it was exercising the kunu. ○ Akumuyé
614 (Aw.B.1, D17) † 1957.

Thus the Awara Bakka and Dipélu lineages exercise the kunu reciprocally one against the other;

784 --A third kunu of recent origin is exercised by a Papa
782 gadu god which had as bearer in 1957 ○ Irma (Aw.B.1, E37).
613 It results from the inadvertent killing of a Dagowe /tic/ snake
[789] by [illegible] Tawa, Irma's brother. At the end of 1957 this kunu
[953] had yet brought on only illnesses of such a kind that people could still hope to exorcise it.

784 The Aw.B.3 group has a special kunu of its own and
613 considers itself out of reach of the kunu of the Aw.B.1.

Anèta, originating in the Djuka village of Tabiki, is subject to the kunu of that lineage as are all her descendants in uterine line. On occasion of serious illnesses the latter have
[782] sometimes had to go to Tabiki village to supplicate the kunu.

[604] This kunu is the one of a god borne by Akanné, Anèta's
789 daughter. In September, 1956, Summa, Akanné's daughter,
[782] was sick. The god revealed that this was its doing. It was supplicated (the other fractions joined the group) and she then got well.

613 Kunu of the Afi lineage. The descendants of Afi † (woman
621 coming from the tribe of the Bakabuchi of Surinam) live for the most part in Assi in close symbiosis with the /228/ Awara Bakka lineage. They are in a situation analogous to that of Anèta's descendants (Aw.B.3) but, perhaps by the simple fact of their number, they form a more individualized unit.

/228 cont./

They are the object of three kunu:

--One exercised by a Papa gadu god whose bearer up into 1956 was Kotoïda († Oct. 1956), who bequeathed it to ○ Mani (Afi lineage, d12).

--The other exercised by a yɔrka of the Lapé lineage. This kunu dates from about 60 years ago; Alémin (Afi lineage, b3, Kormotibo village), 80 years old in 1957, had when he was young cut a clearing in a place which was found to be an old abandoned Boni cemetery (opposite Maripasoula). Some time afterward, a yɔrka revealed itself in a woman of the Lapé lineage, saying that it was exercising a kunu against the family of the sacrilegious person.

It is to this yɔrka, whose bearer is M... (L2, Bonaville), that the death of Kotoïda in October, 1956 is especially attributed.

--A third kunu is exercised by A.... of the Papaïston 2 lineage. A... had committed pikadu. Surprised by Alémin (Afi lineage), he had paid the latter to obtain his silence. But Alémin had talked. Dishonored, A... committed suicide with a gunshot; some time afterward his yɔrka revealed itself in Alémin; it exercises a kunu on this lineage.

Situation of the other lineages with respect to the kunu. The Papaïston lineage is divided into two groups: Papaïston 1 (the principal one) and Papaïston 2, of which there remain only three living members: two women and one young man. This remainder of a lineage continues to bear its own kunu, which is unique and separate from that of the principal group.

The principal group forms a unit with respect to the kunu.

The Lapé lineage, cut from the point of view of genealogy into two pieces, forms a unit with respect to the kunu. We have been able to collect only fragmentary information on the various kunu of this village.

/228 cont./

784 A kunu is exercised by a Dipélu yɔ́ka, borne in 1958 by
275 a Loka woman. It is invoked before the fraga tiki of l'Enfant
078 Perdu village (Dipélu I). Sometimes a broko dí is celebrated
628 for it in the same forms as the ceremony of the eighth day
613 after death.

784 We have likewise not been able to collect complete
613 information on the kunu of the Kotika lineage. This lineage,
114 divided into three fractions, forms a unit with respect to the kunu.

784 A kunu is exercised by the yɔ́ka of a Surinam Creole
613 assassinated in former times by a member of the lineage. Its
095 bearer in 1958 was Todo (K1, E68), a man of the Kotika lo
788 living in Botkville. In 1958 a young woman of the lineage,
[761] Awini (K1, E37), died suddenly; the yɔ́ka revealed that it
[689] had struck Awini because she had a liaison with Sintamann
(K3, E145), thus committing pikadu. The idea of the collective
responsibility of the lineage is so deeply accepted by the Boni
that the near relatives of the dead woman did not reproach
Sintamann at all.

784 /229/ A yɔ́ka of the Kotika lineage may exercise a kunu on
613 the Djuka. This is the case of an affair going back to 1950;
095 a young woman died some time after having a serious discussion
761 with a Djuka woman who had hit her. Deaths among the Djuka
619 these last years had been attributed to its vengeance.

784 It seems that there is no other kunu exercised by a Djuka
619 upon a Boni lineage and vice versa. This is surprising, con-
613 sidering the fights which in former times set the two nations
against each other.

621 The Djuka and Saramaka living isolated in the midst
784 of the Boni know their kunu, which were revealed to them in
[755] childhood. In case of sickness, they employ divinatory pro-
[613] cedures in order to know what kunu is concerned, then they
make offerings... But in case of serious illness, they are forced
to go back to the village of origin of their lineage.

/229 cont./

784 613 [428] The kunu and Boni family life. It follows from the detailed examination we have just made of the situation of the various lineages that the transmission of the kunu within the uterine kin group is a rigorous law which suffers no exception whatever. [571] [602] The process of assimilation which permits in a certain measure, on the social plane, the integration of fragments of paternal kin (like A-ara Bakka 3) into a group does not come into play here. [611] [629] Unity with respect to the kunu can therefore be regarded as a rigorous criterion of a common matrilineal origin. The Boni feel it as an obvious fact and in such a case it is the proof that comes to their minds: "We are of the same origin since we have the same kunu."

784 613 571 182 Thus the kunu appears as the principal cement of the unity of the groups. It opposes the dissociation of the lineages; this curse which weighs collectively upon a group and which can be exorcised only collectively is an iron bond which nothing can break. It obliges the Refugee Blacks to surmount their individualistic tendencies, their egoism which, if they acted freely, would soon have scattered them into a dust of [638] separate persons. In the face of adversity each one accepts with good grace obedience to the elders, who alone know how [672] to talk to the gods and appease them. Nobody ever is indignant or even surprised to be struck down for the offense of another; there is not a movement of revolt or hostility against the one who by his inattention or inconsiderateness has brought on misfortune. On this plane the members of a lineage feel like cells of a single body.

784 613 672 The collective legal responsibility of the members of a group in the domain of customary law flows from the kunu. We have observed that several times, notably at the time of the obsequies for Kotolida (Afi lineage) in October, 1956. The president of the Afi kunu condemned the members of

/229 cont./

784 613 677 the Afi lineage to be thrashed symbolically for not having paid sufficient attention to the warnings of the yaka which had already made Kotoïda sick several times: by their negligence they bore part of the responsibility for Kotoïda's death. Although the Afi and the Awara Bakka live together and regard themselves as members of one community, there was no question whatever of thrashing the Awara Bakka, and that because, not being subject to the same kunu, they bore no responsibility for this death. /230/

Likewise it is taken for granted that the descendants of Anèta (Aw.B.3) do not share the legal responsibility of the Awara Bakka proper (fractions 1 and 2). The fact that Anèta was the wife of Pééyon, captain of the Aw.B., and that her descendants are completely integrated into the life of the village, does not modify this legal situation at all. At the time of the brawl between the Dipéïu and the Awara Bakka in 1948, the Aw.B.3 were not taken to task, any more than the members of the Afi lineage.

791 The relations of the Boni with the entities which are believed to pursue them are most interesting. They seek only to appease the divinity, to calm it provisionally, and to live with it in a state of armed peace, if one may say so.

784 787 When divination has shown that a certain calamity was due to the kunu (sometimes the divinity in question reveals it immediately, through the mouth of its bearer, before being interrogated), it is asked why it struck: it always indicates a precise reason: usually it appears to be inspired by arbitrariness [796] and a pitiless despotism. The Refugee Blacks are not surprised at this, for thus it is that they imagine the lower gods.

784 787 796 In 1948, A.... of the Dji lineage, fell ill; he felt violent pains in his legs. Divination showed that it was the doing of the kEntamasu, which was exercising its kunu upon

/230 cont./

784 787 776 the lineage; questioned, this god declared that it had something to complain about in the bad condition of the house which the members of the lineage had erected to it on its order; the roof of leaves had not been changed and it was raining through.

784 684 It happens also, but as an exception, that the god has sanctioned an offense against morals or more precisely, against the social law, such as the breaking of an interdiction, pikadu (incest in the wider sense, an offense against exogamy). It is necessary to understand that in the thought of the Refugee Blacks, incest unleashes the existing kunu but does not create a new kunu.

In October, 1952, Dolo, a young man of 25 of the Awara Bakka lo, died almost suddenly. Divination revealed [787] [761] [613] that he had been killed by the kunu (it was a Papa gadu which had intervened) in order to sanction an offense committed some time previously by another member of the lo named P.... The latter, a notoriously depraved individual, had committed incest with his own sister.

784 796 782 [787] When the divinity has made known through the mouth of its bearer the causes of its act, the assembled members of the lineage implore it, ask it not to pursue its vengeance; the divinity then requires an offering: for example, if it is a Papa gadu, it will require bottles of beer, some red and white cloth which will be immersed in a given place in the river. It may also require dances in its honor, celebrated by the other possessed people in the village. If it is an Ampuku, it will demand rum, dark-blue cloth which will be exposed in a remote place in the forest. An offering of this kind represents a relatively small sum, even for the Boni (several thousand francs in 1952). The god then declares itself appeased. But it does not pardon and it will resume /231/ its vengeance [183] 776 787 at the first cause. Thus the Boni have hope only in a rigorous observance of customary law and the rites. There are divinities which appeared to be thus appeased for a long time and to

/231 cont./

976 which people do not hesitate to come to ask for remedies or
787 opinions, in spite of the evil they have done to the lineage and perhaps will do tomorrow. It is even allowable to wonder whether people do not prefer to consult the most wicked divinities, for they are believed to be stronger.

784 The kunu focuses, turns aside toward high purposes the
771 blind forces of superstition, fear, and rancor. Several authors
114 who have written on the Refugee Blacks have stated that
754 calamities were almost unfailingly attributed to sorcery (wisi). This is a grave error due to the fact that they believed they could transpose to the Refugee Blacks what is observed among the Creole populations of Surinam. If this were true, no
[789] positive social bond could exist. We believe we can assert that among the Refugee Blacks divination lays the blame on
784 sorcery in only scarcely a tenth of the misfortunes. Here,
[114] among other examples, are several typical cases concerning Boni who worked with us or whom we have known especially well:

[753] --In 1948, Fintiman (Dju) falls ill (violent pains in the
[796] legs): kunu of a Kintamanu.

[752] --In 1948, Galmo (Papaliton) is accidentally hurt (gun backfire): kunu.

[753] --In 1949, Diolé, captain of the Dju lo, is smitten with
[761] hemiplegia and remains paralyzed." He dies in 1951: kunu
[796] of a Papa gadu.

761 --In 1950, a Saramaka is killed in a hunting accident (a gun in poor condition went off by itself): [illegible] (accident).

[754] --In 1951, Kanayen (Kotika) drowns while sailing at night on the river: wisi.

[784] --In 1951, Loka (Dju) dies at the age of 70: kunu of an
[796] Amyuku.

752 --In 1951, F... (Dju) is seriously hurt by the falling of
754 a branch while cutting his clearing: kunu of a yaka.
795

/231 cont./

--In 1952, Dolo (Awara Bakka) dies almost all of a sudden with the symptoms of peritonitis: kunu, punishment for incest committed by another member of the lineage.

--In 1952, Maïèndo, ten years old, son of Osaya (Awara Bakka) accidentally drowns: natural accident (Sagɔɔku).

--In 1954, Bèniti (Dju) dies at nearly 75 years of age: kunu of a Papa gadu.

--In 1954, Agyémési (Aw.B.) dies almost all of a sudden: killed by Odun (he was a wisimã).

--In 1955, Tabiki (Awara Bakka) dies at over 80: natural illness.

--In 195 , Kotoida /sic/ (Afi lineage) dies suddenly, aged about 50: kunu of a yɔkka.

--In 1957, F... (Lapé) is gravely ill with symptoms of typhoid: kunu of a Papa gadu.

--In 1957, Solodo (Dip. II) dies at 40: kunu of a Kintamasu.

/232/ One observes that in the 15 cases cited here, the kunu interferes ten times, while in three cases natural causes: illness, accident, were assumed.

In reality, the Refugee Blacks do not have the conception of a natural world, subject to known or knowable laws, which is set against a supernatural world. The intervention of a Papa gadu is neither more nor less natural than an illness or an accident. There is only, on the plane of human life, more or less frequent intervention by suprahuman forces. The intervention of these forces is made according to laws which embrace the totality of beings and things, laws which men cannot understand but of which they believe they have a partial and empirical knowledge.

/232 cont./

75 It is important not to confuse the kunu with the sufferings
• 784 which other divinities can arbitrarily make men undergo. The
796 kunu has a systematic character. But a divinity theoretically beneficent, and which has come into a man after being called on, may also from time to time bring misfortunes if such is its whim of the moment.

752 In 1949, G... (D)u) was busy cooking a crab in the
796 house of his mother D.... A machete which was fastened to
784 the wall suddenly detached itself and wounded him in the right hand. Now his mother had an Ampuku which had imposed
[787] the crab on her as kina. This Ampuku, immediately called
[428] on, revealed that it really was it which had struck G.... for it did not like to see D...'s son eat crab (note that G... was not at all held to the observance of this kina, for no kina is transmitted from mother to son).

784 Neither must the kunu exercised by a yaka be confused
796 with the vengeance that a dead person can exercise against
613 the members of his own lineage in order to punish them for
969 having neglected their duties.

Punishment inflicted by an ancestor of the lineage seems for the Boni to be a notion distinct from that of the kunu. Vengeance exercised by a yaka upon its own lineage is regarded as exceptional and devoid of the inexorable and definitive character of the kunu, but they assume it to be
[962] possible. They cited to us the case of Yali (Loka), who
[953] committed suicide when accused of sorcery by the people
[761] of his lineage. Since then, his yaka has caused sicknesses and deaths in his own village.

796 Conversely, a god which exercises the kunu upon a
784 lineage may in certain cases intervene in favor of this lineage
613 if such is its whim of the moment. Thus the death of Diamanti
[761] (Aw.B.2, Asiti village, † in 1955) is attributed to the god which exercises the kunu on the village of L'Enfant Perdu and whose bearer was Bédchina. Diamanti had wronged someone of this village and the god had intervened against her.

/232 cont./

In a general way, they consider that the bearer of a god exercising the kunu has nothing to fear from it personally if he rigorously observes the kina which have been imposed upon him. On the other hand, this god will punish any injury to its bearer. Thus these bearers (almost always old women) live surrounded by respect and fear.

/233/ Observations in January, 1958 (misfortunes attributed to vengeance of ancestors on their own lineage).

Do (Lapé) is taken ill on January 7, 1958 with a violent attack of dysentery. The same day his five-year-old son is grievously hurt at the wharf by falling on a broken bottle. Alarmed by this coincidence, the members of the Lapé lo assemble and proceed to question a possessed person. The latter reveals that it is the doing of an old woman of the lineage, Atala, dead for two years. Several lineage members have already been sick from this; the dead woman wanted to sanction offenses committed by the people of the lineage.

The same day in Boniville, Klément (Dju), to whom I am recounting this affair, tells me that before the lifting of mourning for his mother Béniti, he and his sisters were sick. Divination showed that it was the doing of Béniti, who wished to hasten the celebration of the ceremony.

The kunu and social peace among the Boni. Role of the grand man. The kunu exercised by a yɔ́ɔka creates very strange relations among the Boni lineages. As blind and arbitrary as the vengeance attributed to the yɔ́ɔka may be, the Boni have the sense of the legal unity of the lineage too much for any resentment to exist: "They are killing our family..."; and yet the two lineages find themselves henceforth irreparably bound together. The victims of the kunu can no longer get along without people of the lineage of the yɔ́ɔka which pursues them with its vengeance, since they alone, by their prayers, can appease temporarily the anger of their ancestor. One conceives of the

784 /233 cont./ One conceives of the
795 interminable dimension which this situation entails: if the
613 manifestations of the kunu do not cease, the victims let it be
978 understood that the prayers were badly made..... /Figure 28 appears here./

961 Every suspicious death whose circumstances lead to the
628 belief that /234/ an inhabitant of another village was responsible can bring on a punitive expedition against that village and
613 other villages of the same kin group. By taking this vengeful
784 attitude even before the grand man has been notified and the blamed people heard, the people of the dead person's lineage are thinking above all else of taking precautions against the action of the dead person, who could turn back his vengeance against them. Actually, these fights are above all symbolic; the wisdom of the Refugee Blacks has promulgated precepts which many nations could take as a pattern, in order that these punitive expeditions might not have serious consequences:

--One may strike only with the fists, and blood must not flow;

--Men may strike only men, while the women find fault with women;

--One may fight only on the village common and before witnesses, never in the bush or on the river. As a general rule, the people aimed at by the expedition do not resist, but flee into the bush or on the boats, or group themselves around the fraga tiki, holy place which the aggressors must respect.

628 We have told about the expedition made in April, 1957
613 by the people of Asui-Awara Bakka against the villages of L'Enfant Perdu (Dipélu I) and Kormotibo (Dipélu II). Eight years earlier, in 1949, another squabble had thrown the Dipélu against the Awara Bakka after the death of Pénélopa (Dip. II), whom her husband Boolo had taken to Surinam and who had died there. The Kormotibo people claimed that Boolo was responsible for her death. They went to attack the people of Asui who, although three times more numerous, did not try

/234 cont./

628 613 to resist and fled to Bonaville, where some took refuge in the water, others in the bush. About ten shacks were broken (without great damage), principally kitchens and empty sheds. Only one man could be caught and he received several punches.

The expedition of April, 1957 against the villages of L'Enfant Perdu and Kormotibo did not do much more harm. Only one good house was smashed, that of Akwali (Dip. II, Kormotibo) because its owner, passing by in a boat on the river, insulted the aggressors....

784 613 619 648 Surinam Creoles

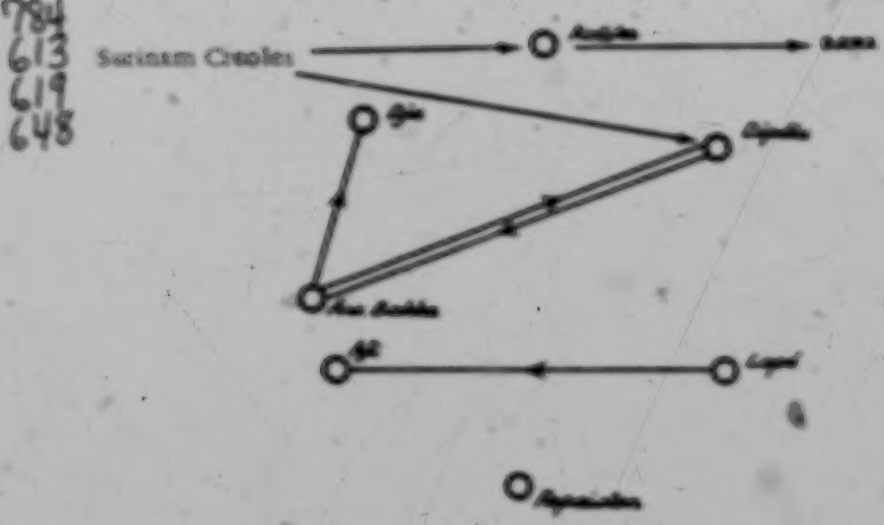

Fig. 28. Schema of the hits exercised upon one another by the various lineages.

643 /235 cont./

995 A few years ago a Kormotibo woman was thus confounded.
787 She had wanted to pretend possession by a yɔ́kɛ in order to
695 blackmail another family.

Grand Man Difu recently forbade the bequeathing of gods
784 and yɔ́kɛ exercising the kunu (1). People will wait for them
423
643
[787]

1. Let us recall that the dead are questioned on this subject as for the apportionment of the rest of their heritage.

to manifest themselves of their own accord. That will reduce the risks of pretense.

643 The grand man's lineage does not exercise any kunu upon
613 another lineage, and no kunu is exercised upon it. For the Boni
775 this is a fundamental idea, because the grand man is precisely
784 the supreme recourse in case of persistent calamities attributed to the yɔ́kɛ of a dead person. The grand man has the power to exercise all the dead Boni. If his lineage exercised a kunu or were victim of one, he would be judge and litigant at the same time.

When, with the death of Grand Man Difu, the Dikan lineage is extinct, and when the function passes to another lineage, consideration of the kunu exercised by the lineages upon one another will be determinative in the choice of his successor.

9

Divination; Premonition; Dreams

787 Divination. It plays an essential role among the Refugee Blacks
626 as in all animistic societies. Individuals have recourse to it
182 to inquire all important decisions; in large measure one can say that for them it takes the place of will and conscience.

/239 cont./ The struggle against
754 781 wisi is one of the foundations of their social life. protection against the undertakings of the wisimɛ one of the most constant worries of each person. Nobody knows these wisimɛ with certainty; one is reduced to vague suspicions of this or that person, which one dares not formulate for lack of proof. No one knows exactly how they operate. Yet each one feels their enterprises everywhere about him, and those who by reason of their wealth or successes with women have the most reason to believe themselves exposed to jealousy live in anxiety.

754 828 784 Intense jealousy or hate are already a form of wisi, and this is why each one must try to drive them out of his heart; besides, he would risk falling ill or being subject to all sorts of calamities for having broken his oath. But the wisimɛ employs explicit procedures:

--Burying a bottle (beli bata) containing sorcery under his enemy's door. When the latter comes home, the sorcery will 751 penetrate into him. So some Refugee Blacks carry a special ɔbia against this kind of aggression: thanks to this ɔbia, they will feel a sharp pain in the tip of the foot when approaching the bottle, which they will thus uncover easily.

754 794 --Kisi akkaa, stealing the akka of the enemy. The latter then becomes mad. The Boni believe that the wisimɛ operates at night, taking advantage of the fact that the enemy's akka has left his body to wander. He captures it by attracting it with what it likes. For that, one must know the name of his enemy's akka, know its tastes and preferences; all things which each Refugee Black will carefully hide, even from his comrades. What the wisimɛ does with the akka was not clear to any of our informants. He tries either to capture it in order to deprive his enemy of it, or to make it hostile to its bearer, or to inspire it with abnormal ideas or tastes. If someone manifests an abnormal change /239/ in tastes or behavior, people will be inclined to think that a wisimɛ was able to act upon his akka.

754 /240 cont./
755 will be obliged to confess: "It is I who killed So-and-So and
787 So-and-So." They immediately inform the grand man, who
754 orders the usual procedure against wisimã: Ceremonies are
766 suspended, the body is transported by boat to a place reserved for cursed people, downstream from Boni country, and it is abandoned in the bush without being buried. Grand Man Difu is trying to modify this custom and to compel burial of wisimã in a special cemetery, but without great success up to now, it seems.

754 There is no broko dɛ. The spouse may remarry immediate-
765 ly. Since the property of the deceased are presumed to be ill-
768 gotten, inheritance is cancelled. The house is destroyed and thrown into the water, the boat abandoned to the current. Personal belongings of the deceased are turned over to the grand man who distributes them to whom he wishes.

The near relatives of persons thus designated are overcome with shame but can say nothing. Not a bit of responsibility is imputed to them.

754 How does society protect itself against the sorcery of the
755 wisimã from beyond the grave? According to Grand Man Difu,
784 this is a problem which does not come up. The wisimã has been killed by Odun as punishment for his crimes. Since every being draws its force from the divine, he has no more force, he is destroyed as a being, he is no longer anything but an empty shadow incapable of doing harm.

754 In fact, among the Refugee Blacks these trials of dead
755 people are very rare. Whereas about 15 persons die per year
787 on the average in Boni country, including about ten adults,
[165] in the last 20 years (1) only about 20 persons were revealed to be wisimã.

1. Disregarding the period 1957-1959 when a definite fresh outbreak of the fear of wisimã was observed.

/242 cont./

754 764 787 Of course he was recognized as a wisimɛ by the first adjuration made to his body carried on the papay on the heads of two men: "If thou art a wisi man, do not come toward us." The dead man drew back. /

[784] /243/ Continuation of the interrogation showed that he had not yet killed anybody, but that he had been killed by Odun when he was preparing to kill someone of his lineage.

754 The persecutors of Agyémési, contrary to their hope, did not recover after his death from the maladies which they were attributing to his sorcery; that did not shake their conviction in 755 648 the least. They left for Paramaribo to have themselves treated by a Creole magician (for the Surinam Creoles, who practice white magic and black magic indiscriminately, are by this fact reputed to be more expert than the Refugee Blacks in combating the effects of wisi).

754 In recounting this story to us, the grand man told us that it is always necessary to be cautious with accusations of wisi, [762] because one can never be sure. A man unjustly accused can [784] commit suicide and pursue his accusers with his kunu (most of the Boni state that they would do so in such a case). In former 173 times, the barbarous punishments in use in Africa were applied 683 to revealed wisimɛ: they were burned alive. But people tell 784 that one of them, some months afterward, undertook against his accusers' lineage a kunu which still lasts today. He had been [178] wrongly condemned! It is through fear of the kunu more than through care for humanity, that these punishments have been abolished.

754 It certainly seems that the constant fear of the wisimɛ in [152] which the Boni live is only a collective hallucination, and that rare indeed are those who dare to indulge in practices which might draw upon them such terrible social and religious sanctions. As for these practices themselves, they appear to be without any real content, and the misfortunes attributed to them are

/243 cont./

754 [683] only commonplace illnesses or accidents of some sort. We have never heard poisoning, in the usual sense of the term, mentioned.

754 695 182 The wisimã trials are in our opinion the most unpleasant aspect of the civilization of the Refugee Blacks. But it must be admitted that they correspond to profound necessities. These archaic societies need an obvious materialization of the principles they have given themselves. Since evil exists, opposing itself to good, the practices of wisi and wisimã exist, and the punishment of evildoers is indispensable for the society to remain subject to the law of good.

[984] By its notion of the kunu which turns aside toward the gods the responsibility for most misfortunes, by the extreme rarity of wisimã trials, by the prudence of its judiciary action which in point of fact pursues only the dead, the society of the Refugee Blacks shows itself humane and realistic.

If one undertook with the Refugee Blacks definite action to make these practices disappear, one would risk obscuring their notion of good and evil and removing all efficacy from their customary law.

[183] The social order of the Refugee Blacks cannot be maintained if the interdiction of harming anyone and the interdiction of vengeance do not remain clearly laid down. It matters little that these acts of sorcery are without real content: It is the intention to harm which counts, with all its social and psychological consequences.

171 177 182 754 When one observes the Creole populations of the Guianas and the West Indies, even though /244/ they have been under the influence of Christianity for several centuries, one is struck by the development of sorcery and by its repercussions on the whole of social life. The teaching received at school and from the catechism, which embraces white magic and black magic in a single reprobation, has greatly contributed toward making these populations lose the principles of social morals of their ancestors without in exchange modifying their

d:Herault--383 K-5 (1948-1958) 1961 SR8 Bush Negroes SR8 Boni

/244 cont./

954 695 571 In 1956, a Bonaville woman, N...., was convicted of having paid a Creole quimboiseur to make the grand man die. She confessed, a rare thing in this kind of case, and the materiality of the facts did not appear doubtful. The Boni were strongly impressed by this unprecedented event, and for several weeks the members of the lineage concerned were in such agitation that one could have believed they had lost their reason. In Bonaville they "held court" continually for nearly two months, and they discussed so much that farm work was neglected and part of the rice crop lost.

954 695 683 [648] What were they going to do with this woman? The laws of Odun forbade killing her, no more could she be expelled. The Boni made discreet overtures to the administration to find out whether it was not possible to have her imprisoned. They were surprised to learn that French law does not recognize the offense of sorcery. Somebody then proposed having her admitted as a servant at the leprosarium of the Acarouani on the /245/ coast. This suggestion produced a surprising result; the Boni were unanimous in thinking that making someone who was not a leper live in a leprosarium was a punishment worse than death, and they resolved to pardon her.

How does one go about it, since the laws of Odun do not permit pardoning a wisima? Nobody could give us a satisfactory justification on this, but in 1959 A...., the preceding year spurned and maltreated, had taken up normal living again in her village.

954 761 • 784 In fact, a case of wisi is terminated only upon the death of the person concerned. If a man who has been accused of wisi during his lifetime dies accidentally, or is struck by a fulminating sickness, the fact that he has been chastised by Odun appears as incontestable proof. The case is fixed in the memory of the group in a specific form and will be given as an example to inspire respect for customary law.

6:Hurault--386 K-5 (1948-1956) 1961 SRS Bush Negroes SRS Boni

754 181 178 [787]

/346 cont./ of his near relatives, his sister's children being regarded as the victims most pleasing to the demon.

Although in former times one to two out of ten deaths were attributed to wisi, in 1957 and 1958 out of 14 adult deaths of which we could obtain the explanation, there were:

[784]

--Four wisimã killed by Odun, including two women of over 85 who during their lifetime had never been the object of unfavorable notice;

[24]

--One death by the action of a wisimã,

or a total of more than a third of the deaths; out of the nine others, two were looked upon as natural deaths (dead of old age), seven were attributed to the kunu.

754 648

The Refugee Blacks and Creole magic. Some of them go to get from the lukumã what their own social morals forbid: vengeance or success acquired at the expense of other people. They have uttered an oath that prohibits the practice of wisi: for most of them it is clear that if they paid a piayeur /magician, sorcerer/ to harm someone, it would be the same as if they performed the sorcery themselves. But others make a mental reservation on this point.

754 755 648

In 1951, G.... of the Kotika lo, then about 20 years old, felt ill while staying at Saint Laurent. He went to find a Creole maltif (clairvoyant) who presented him with a mirror, announcing to him that he was going to see in it the face of the one who had piayé /bewitched, cast a spell on/ him. G... saw nothing in the mirror. The maltif was not upset at this and revealed to him that the piayeur must be someone in his wife's family. G... then recalled a dispute he had had some time previously with one of his wife's brothers and let himself be convinced: since that day he has not gotten along with his brother-in-law.

/252 cont./

789 The one who installs a kĩndu utters the formula: mi poti yu ya, kĩu a sama kɔm fu fufu mi sani, yu mu siki ẽn (I put thee here; if someone comes to steal my belongings, thou must make him sick).

• [784] If someone goes beyond [1] and commits a theft, he will be struck sooner or later with various sicknesses.

According to the conception of the Refugee Blacks, the kĩndu is blind and strikes as well the friend who came to take objects because he received previous authorization to do it. So, many forego placing kĩndu, as with us, people hesitate to set wolf-traps for fear of causing accidents.

789 784 428 However, the kĩndu does not act upon the people who have the same basic interdiction (bwasi kina) as the one who placed it. This conception shows that these interdictions transmitted from father to children really are the mark of true patrilineages.

694 789 754 In fact, we have ascertained several times, there are burglaries in Boni country in spite of the kĩndu and people do not succeed in uncovering the burglars; it is infinitely probable that one must not see in this the stamp of freethinkers who do not believe in sorcery; these are people who have obtained from a wulimã a talisman of black magic stronger than the kĩndu! At least this is the explanation their victims give.

789 751 One can lift a kĩndu on behalf of any man, whom one wants, for example, to send to get an object which one has forgotten; for that it is sufficient to give him mula: one blows into one's hands and lays them on the man's head, saying: mi puu a kĩndugi yu a 'ĩ mu du a sani ɲga yu: I withdraw the kĩndu for thee, it must not do anything to thee. /253/

Mula can be given retroactively: If someone perceives that he has inadvertently incurred the chastisement of a kĩndu, he has several days to be able to ask for mula from the owner, for the action of the kĩndu is slow.

/253 cont./

751 Tyifunga (1). This is the name of the magic enclosures made
417
820

1. They also use the word azăg, borrowed from the Fon of Dahomey.

of thorn ("tongues") of plant palm, pina tingo, attached to a string, with which on certain occasions a village is completely surrounded. These enclosures are thought to bar the passage of the evil spirits of the bush (taku uni); they are put up especially in the case of an epidemic, as well as before the great festivals which attract a crowd of persons among whom wiimi can slip
789 in. After putting the enclosure in place, people arrange themselves in a line at one end of the village and move along slowly so as to sweep its whole surface, firing guns, making all the noise possible by striking metallic objects and striking the ground with reeds to expel the evil spirits. This is what is called naki tyifunga. The elders repeat the formula: "U naki tyifunga fu ați ta: mu ku a ați (We strike tyifunga so that the evil (spirits) may not be able to come to earth)."

751 The magic fence is then left in place until it is rotten.
419

753 Beliefs about leprosy. Lepers are buried at the limits of the
76 cemetery, but they are not considered cursed, and mourning for them is carried out normally.

753 /254/ They take for granted that if someone is attacked by
784 leprosy, it is because he has "broken" his bwasi kina. They think that an enemy can, because of ill will, hide a bit of the forbidden fare in the food. This is why the Bozo do not willingly tell one another their interdictions.

/254 cont./

784 752 751 If someone realizes that he has broken his kina, he goes to see, not an Obiaman, but the specialist-healer of leprosy and asks him to treat him by way of prevention.

411 832 (177) (558) Beliefs about guns and hunting. The gun, which entered the everyday life of the Refugee Blacks two centuries ago, has taken an important place in their magic. It is the symbol of virility. A Refugee Black who no longer has a gun is a man humiliated and almost dishonored. As one of them explained to us in begging us to help him replace his old gun eaten by rust: "If you cannot present yourself before the women with a machete, hunting bag on your shoulder, and gun in your hand, you are not a man."

411 754 This idea has been transposed onto the plane of magic and they take for granted that the wisimi can, by putting evil spells on a gun, attack the owner of the weapon in his virility. It is supposed to be enough for someone to put his finger into the barrel of the gun while uttering a formula of vengeance, or even being moved by hate for the owner of the weapon, for this gun to be no longer capable of hitting the mark. So, to avoid these misfortunes, the Boni never part with their guns and never lend them to anyone. If, in spite of these precautions, they have the impression that a gun no longer fires so well, they will 411 989 go to an Obiaman to have it washed of maleficent influence. There exist for that purpose several remedies all of which consist of soaking the gun for one to three days in infusions of leaves, which has the unfailing result of making it rust. We have seen a hammerless, latest model gun spoiled thus by an intelligent Boni head boatman, a clever mechanic and usually full of good sense.

224 We have never witnessed among the Boni any individual or collective hunting rites claiming to attract game or to promote meeting it (when, on the contrary, hunting prayes are extremely widespread among the Creoles).

752 834 [191] /This cont./
Bolaman who treats a wound made by a firearm to observe chastity during the whole duration of the treatment. It is for this reason that the Boni hesitate to have gunshot wounds cared for in hospitals.

784 262 Kina. The interdictions of the Refugee Blacks generally have to do with food. There are five categories of them to our knowledge:

[753] --Bwasi kina, basic kina, mark of patrilineages, the breaking of which gives leprosy;

--Akka kina, often called gadu kina, established by divination and believed to be imposed by the akka;

--Gadu kina, mark of possession by a divinity;

--Obia kina, interdiction attached to each object involving a magic power, and which must be observed for this power to last;

--Finally, local kina, particularly the kina de, days of rest, going back to the idea of the day of rest of the local divinity. They observe, for example, that the Mana River has a kina de on Sunday. The Saramaka observe it strictly. The Boni we took on the Mana in 1949 went to find out from the Saramaka, and asked us to stop navigation on Sunday, for this kina was very urgent. It is noteworthy however that the Boni bow in such circumstances before the will of the Europeans, as with respect to their own kina de of Friday; in effect they are assuming that if they are ordered to be on duty, it is the European alone who bears the responsibility for breaking the kina.

[648]

[428] [194] [613] It is possible that the kina alluded to by Mr. W. F. Van Lier and which, among the Djuka, would be imposed on a whole matrilineage are also local kina; in any case no kina is transmissible through the mother, all the Refugee Blacks are explicit on that point.

/253 cont./

784 242 A... of the Dyö lo, about 28 years old in 1956, must observe six kina:

--The cayman and the jaguar as bwasi kina.

--The otter (yundu) as akka kina. /256/

These three kina have been imposed on him since his first years, but the meaning of them was explained to him only later on.

[151] --The eel (mɛ̃ɛ̃ni) was imposed on him as a kina by his father when the latter gave him a man nɛ̃ŋge ɔbia. ɔbia of protection against machete or gun, materialized by an iron bracelet.

[841 834] To this ɔbia is attached another kina. A... must not speak to a woman having her menstrual period.

[151 189] --Finally, the crab (kaabu), kina attached to an ɔbia of which the man concerned only spoke with reticence, probably a Kumɛ̃nti bui (bracelet of Kumɛ̃nti, instrument of divination).

A... has no gadu kina in the strict sense of the term.

There exists no food kina common to all the Boni; the cayman is generally forbidden to them as bwasi kina, associated with another animal; but this is not absolute; we know at least one Boni who has not received this kina.

If someone has broken a kina inadvertently, he can have himself cleansed of this offense by ɔbiaman. But if he broke it willfully, he cannot escape the punishment attached to the offense.

845 ?21 Beliefs about twins. They have the idea that twins and children who follow twins are of a nature different from other men, participating in a divine principle.

[155] Twins cannot live (since they do not belong to ordinary humanity) if they are not treated with a special remedy known only to certain lineages especially rich in twins.

/837/

This worship is celebrated each time there is occasion to protect newborn babies. They are washed with a certain decoction of leaves.

Every four or five years on the average a big dance takes place, then the father and mother of twins and the twins themselves are washed in order to maintain their powers and keep them in good health.

If these dances are not held, dead twins will show their anger by making living twins and parents of twins sick.

Lineages that do not have twins do not practice these rites. If twins are born to them, they will apply at the place of worship of another lineage.

Papalisson and Lapé have this cult particularly highly developed.

Tone pikin. It is assumed that a woman may be made pregnant by a river god, either a Papa gadu snake god or by the Wata lagi, which look like Indians. Children thus conceived are called tone pikin.

A ..., of Papalisson, had cut a clearing opposite a remarkable white rock called Weti sëb, where she used to moor her boat. She had not had any children for several years and she became pregnant. When her daughter was born a possessed person revealed that she was born of a Papa gadu snake god which lived there: since then her parents /relatives/ go regularly to this rock to make offerings.

About 1910 Alama (Kormotibo) had followed her husband to a shipyard on the lower river; one day while walking in the forest she met an Indian having the appearance of a Galibi Indian, who was carrying a newborn baby. She stopped and admired the baby. The Indian said to her: "Do you wish to raise him?" She acquiesced. He said: "We shall see each other again"; then he went away so quickly that she had the impression that he had disappeared on the spot.

241 /259 cont./
776 Cult of Mama go3. Mama go3, mother of the earth, is repre-
(532) sented by a crude statue of white clay provided with enormous
331 breasts, symbol of fecundity, which can be seen in a little
778 hut situated on the open place of Boniville village. Each
243 year, when the time for cutting the clearings approaches, the
(782) grand man, surrounded by many other people, prays to the god to grant fertility to the plantings. If rain does not fall, an offering of water and tafia is made and the statue is sprinkled.

811 The Boni do not appear to associate the idea of women's fecundity with that of the fertility of the soil, and we have not heard anyone say that the grand man prays on this subject.

241 Neither do they appear to have a very clear idea about
776 the relationships of this worship with that of the go3 gadu, local gods of the soil.

796 Every three years a great procession dance takes place
535 in Boniville on January 1. /260/ in which the Papa gadu gods
789 dance in front of the sanctuary of Mama go3. We have not been able to obtain specific information on the meaning of this rite.

241 Cult of the go3 gadu. It is assumed that every portion of land
776 is under the sway of a local god, go3 gadu. Its power is
(784) limited only by the fertility of the soil, and he who neglects its worship cannot be attacked in his person or in his goods, but only punished by a poor harvest.

What is the nature of these gods, what is their place in the cosmogony? These are questions which not one of our informants had ever asked himself. In their minds, go3 gadu has a de facto existence, and is rendered de facto worship. This worship consists essentially of:

(782) --Offerings made at the moment of planting;

(527) --The observance of a local day of rest, kina de, corresponding to the god's day of rest.

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241 neglecting these rites. Their rigorous observance has the effect of preventing farming from becoming for them a commercial activity and of keeping a religious and family feeling in it.

824 798 784 [796] --The 'Atiti (silk-cotton tree) is a much feared tree, for according to the elders each one of them shelters 12 categories of divinities, especially a Papa gadu and an Ampuku. So it is absolutely impossible to cut it. One must even be very careful not to injure its roots which spread far. The size of every one felled is preserved. Likewise people watch carefully so as not to injure the roots of the big silk-cotton trees often found in the villages.

825 778 776 361 Still, the fact that their size was chosen for setting up a village shows that people believe they can make an alliance with the divinities which reside in a silk-cotton tree and draw their protection upon themselves.

824 798 784 [796] --The watu tree (Bombax Surinamiensis), tree of very large size, living in symbiosis with a parasitic liana which appears to enclose it in a gigantic net, also shelters maleficent divinities (Ampuku, Papa gadu, Bumba gadu). One may cut it down after performing rites whose purpose is to transfer these divinities into another tree.

First, one must have procured from a man who possesses this remedy a pot of sbia containing an infusion of leaves in the middle of which is a bracelet of fibers. /262/ It costs [835] two liters of tafia, four liters of beverage (beer for example), one large piece of cloth, and one machete.

Having arrived at the foot of the tree, one bathes his body and machete with this infusion; one puts the fiber bracelet on one's arm. One also bathes several small sticks provided [822] with squares of white cloth (for the Papa gadu), dark blue and red (for the Ampuku), and a pinot palm (pina tsogo) leaf.

One plants the sticks at the foot of the tree, one strikes the trunk with the palm leaf while invoking the divinities of

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824 771 784 the tree: "Ala sani di a na a ufu ya, da mu kumɔto, beka mi ɔ faa ɛɲ. Kɔm na a pina tɛ̃ŋgo: All things (suprahuman entities) who are in this tree, leave it, for I am going to throw it to the ground; come into this palm leaf." One takes away the palm leaf and the little flags far from there into the interior of the lands, to a spot where nobody is likely to come to fell trees, and one arranges them beside some big tree. The divinities will come and settle there. Nevertheless, it is still necessary to wait almost a month to cut the katu tree, probably to leave the maleficent influences time to dissipate.

824 771 784 [771] The Boni are so afraid of this tree that many of them, deeming these precautions insufficient, give up the idea of cutting it down and go to establish their clearings elsewhere. The Creole gold miners of the Haut Maroni, who call it cottonwood, also attribute a maleficent influence to it and some of them do not cut it.

The Refugee Blacks fear also, but to a lesser degree, what they call kɔtikɔti, that is, the small trees of any species which, instead of having grown straight, have two angles in their trunk like a Z. This is a very rare anomaly. In such a shrub is hidden a maleficent entity, taku sani, capable, if a man cut the trunk unintentionally, to take revenge on him by paralyzing a limb or even the whole body in a bent position. In order to see whether or not the entity is present in the shrub, there exists, according to the Boni, a very simple means: one gently brings the finger near the bent part. If he feels his finger held there to the point where he has trouble drawing it back, the genie is present! The power of autosuggestion characteristic of the Refugee Blacks shows itself clearly here.

[784] [771] Rites exist for rendering the kɔtikɔti harmless, for cutting them with impunity, and even for using them in magic preparations, but we do not know the details. Kɔtikɔti are among the objects usually found in the chapels (ɔbia ɔsu) of Kumẽnti; we have even happened to see one used to fasten a

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door; it was a particularly feared afodu that no thief would have dared to remove.

--The Kintamasu are the divinities, especially maleficent and hostile to men, who live in the termitaries (these are termites proper, who make their nest in the earth, and not wood lice, much more common). There is one to each termitary.

After a meticulous examination of the soil of the clearing, one marks all the termitaries /263/ and sprinkles each of them with a preparation containing leaves, pink clay kukusu, and manioc juice. One adjures the genie to go away, no matter where.

It happens that in spite of all the precautions taken a termitary is forgotten. Then, several days later, one will have the consternation of seeing the Kintamasu reveal itself in someone of the lineage; it announces that it is going to exercise its kunu (curse). It is temporarily appeased by offerings of tafia, various drinks, red cloth.

The Kintamasu call themselves the Akpio. Through the mouth of their bearers they speak a language nobody understands. However, when they wish to be understood by those present they speak Kumanti.

Observation in Booniville, January, 1957:

A...., boatman of the border-fixing mission, asks for three days off. His wife, Masauman, has been ill for several days; divination (in this particular case the gita of a female relative in his lineage) showed that it was the doing of a Kintamasu injured in the burning of the clearing which he himself, A...., cut for his wife in October. The Kintamasu has not yet manifested itself directly, but a kunu threatens; to appease it he must put in action the remedy known only to M...., an old man of Asisi. He will go to the spot, following

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539 Anansi said: "Brother deer, go over there; you will find a trident I use for hunting; pull it out of the ground." The deer came back saying: "It is done." He showed him another trident which he himself had brought and hidden. Then Anansi said (to the genie): "Throw me to see." He threw him to the summit of the trees. He fell back on the trident. The deer knocked him down with a club, cut out his liver, and took it to Wénon. He said to Wénon: "Anansi and I killed a tiger. He stayed to smoke it. He sent the liver for you to cook." She prepared the liver and boiled rice. They ate to the last mouthful. Then the deer said: "All livers are good but Anansi's liver is the best." Wénon grabbed a pestle to strike him, but he was already far away.

3) Anansi and the Magic Frying-Pan

(One day) Anansi went exploring in the bush, comrades. He went into the bush one day, until... he was hungry. And now he saw a frying-pan hooked in the air. He went near, he said: "Frying-pan, why art thou beautiful thus?" It said: "I am beautiful, but I am not beautiful for nothing." He said: "Let me see." It began to fry all sorts of things, fritters, meat. He said: "Put that down on the ground in front of me." It put them before him. Then Anansi ate, he ate until... his belly was full. He said: "Frying-pan, I beg of thee, stop." It stopped, ghan! He said: "What kina dost thou have, in truth(1)?" It said: "It is the lemon, lemon juice, and the

1. Let us remember that in the minds of the Refugee Blacks, to the exercise of any magic power corresponds a kina (interdiction).